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Skipper's View

LAUNCH OF OUR 2015 AWARDS; HELP FOR VANUATU, AND THE MUCH-ANTICIPATED START OF THE SAILING SEASON



IT'S AN EXCITING time at *Sailing Today*. We've taken the big step of launching our first-ever cruising awards, and we're asking for your input on pp32-33.

At this early stage, we're calling on readers to spread the word and to nominate candidates in three categories: yacht club of the year, sailor of the year and best cruising photograph. Just email your nominations to us at awards@sailingtoday.co.uk

In the August issue we'll publish the shortlist in categories covering new boats, gear, cruising grounds and exceptional sailors. That fires the starting gun and opens the voting to readers and the wider public online at sailingtoday.co.uk. It's time to have your say!

After the catastrophic impact of Cyclone Pam on the Pacific island of Vanuatu, we thought we'd have a look at how sailors can help the islanders. Many circumnavigations pass through the small island republic, and cruisers have warm words for the friendly locals and stunning scenery. As you'll see from our news review story on p12, one of the best ways to support Vanuatu is to keep sailing there – the islands sorely need the income generated by sailing yachts. Should you not have an ocean-ready boat and a couple of spare years, however, there is plenty that can be done closer to home.

Finally, if you are lucky enough to be planning a long passage sometime soon, be sure to have a good look at our Atlantic crossing survey, conducted among the 46 boats that signed up for last year's Atlantic Odyssey rally in November/December. There's lots of good feedback on the equipment and rigs that worked best, as well as those that didn't. Look out for part two in the next issue.

By the time you read this, my boat will be back in the water and that slightly mystical process of refamiliarising myself with her sailing habits will be under way. I relish that almost tangible sense of horizons expanding on every side; Brittany, the Azores or even Brazil seem suddenly within reach.

With the arrival of spring, enjoy your sailing.

Sam Fortescue, editor

Sam



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sailingtoday.co.uk

CONTRIBUTORS



HOWARD STEEN first sailed on Scotland's west coast in 1988, but has spent recent years in Norway



PAUL HEINEY, writer and broadcaster, has raced singlehanded across the Atlantic and cruised widely



ANDY LAUDER caught the sailing bug after a Channel passage and is now a Yachtmaster Instructor



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HOWARD STEEN

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PAUL HEINEY



St Barths

Photo by Christophe Jouany

Best known for the St Barths Bucket regatta held over four days at the end of March, the Caribbean island of St Barthélemy is still a French territory. The main island measures just 6 miles by 4 miles, but there are numerous islets around its shores. Good anchorages and beaches abound in the deep bays and there is an intriguing combination of French and Caribbean styles ashore.



Ebb and flow

EVENTS | GOSSIP | NEWS FROM THE SAILING COMMUNITY

TURKEY EXTENDS BLUE CARD SCHEME

BOAT OWNERS CRUISING in Turkey are being warned that the 'blue card' waste disposal system has been extended to cover a wider area.

Under the scheme, sailors are required to buy a 20 lira card (c£5), which is programmed with the boat's details, including size of holding tank and the number

of people on board. Local authorities can then work out how often cruisers must have the tank pumped out. This is enforced via fines for not pumping out and for not having the card.

The blue water card is mandatory in Istanbul and the Marmaris area and is expected to reach as far as Izmir by

this summer. However, cruisers have reported that some marinas do not have any pumping-out facilities.

And one skipper told noonsite.com that some people have been fined for dumping grey water in Göcek, after the authorities noticed bubbles from washing up liquid in the sea.



SAM FORTESCUE

UK boat-ownership tops 1.2m

THE NUMBER OF water craft owned by households in the UK has increased to more than 1.2 million, a survey has found.

According to British Marine Federation figures, the all-boat total (including kayaks, jet-skis and motorboats) has grown by more than four per cent in two years.

Sailing boats of all sizes numbered 258,000 in 2014, including 54,000 larger cruising

type yachts owned by 50,000 households. A total 95 per cent of these are kept in this country and 2,500 are kept abroad. Yacht ownership is highest in the east of England.

The research showed that 3.5 million UK adults participated in one or more of 12 boating activities in 2014, or 7.1 per cent of the adult population. The number of women involved with boating has continued to

rise, reaching 6.2 per cent in 2012-14 (the joint highest since 2007 and a rise since 2010). The percentage of over-55s getting out on the water has risen by two-thirds since 2002.

BMF chief executive Howard Pridding said: "Getting out on the water is a hugely enjoyable pastime and the marine industry is in great shape to provide plenty of opportunities to enable this."



CORK INSTITUTE OF Technology has been awarded c£900,000 of EU funding to develop a co-ordinated yacht cruising route between Cork and Arctic Norway

DEADLY FIND

A controlled explosion was carried out after a hand-grenade was found near Tynemouth Sailing Club. Police were called when the device was discovered on the beach 50m from the sailing club. Officers set up a cordon and a bomb disposal unit from Catterick Garrison made the area safe.



WCC

Bluewater briefing rerun

Last year's Bluewater Open Boat Weekend proved so popular that the organisers are holding it again this year. Hosted by the World Cruising Club and offshore yacht broker Berthon, the free event will take place on 16 and 17 May at Berthon's yard in Lymington. There will be bluewater boats to view and seminars and discussions on how to get started. Experts will give tips on refits, sails, rigging and equipment and visitors will be able to talk to offshore cruisers about their own experiences. Entry is free but you need to pre-register at tinyurl.com/wcc-openboat-2015.

Thieves steal 20 outboards

POLICE ARE WARNING that the theft of outboards is on

the rise after thieves cut their way into Hythe Sailing Club and stole 20 engines.

Burglars cut through security fencing and into a container that was being used as a storage facility at the Southampton club on 29 March.



HYTHESAILINGCLUB.CO.UK

They took a 150hp four-stroke Yamaha, a 3.5hp Tohatsu, a 2.5hp Mercury Mariner and a 4hp Suzuki.

The sailing club advises anyone buying a secondhand engine to check identity numbers with police first. Owners are also urged to use the free national property register immobilise.com.

GOING UP



THE POPULARITY OF North Cyprus as a tourist and sailing destination is on the up as a 10.8 per cent rise in visitors last year.



SHOPPING IN COWES has been given a boost after Beijing Olympic sailor Andrew Palfrey opened a flagship Zhik (pronounced 'zike') store on the high street.



CREATIVE COMMONS/DENISE

CONFIDENCE IN HARBOUR dues in the BVIs has taken a knock, after a fee for all boats in territorial waters was introduced, then revoked, with confusing guidance.



SCIC SAILING IS offering two clothes-free cruises in Turkey this summer. Just mind the rigging!

GOING DOWN

OCC elects veteran sailors

TWO MEN WHO have circumnavigated the world 12 times between them have been elected honorary members of the Ocean Cruising Club.

Australian Jon Sanders completed his first solo round-world trip in 1977 in a Sparkman & Stephens 34 and finished his ninth only

a few weeks ago, aged 75.

Brit Les Powles, now aged 90, sailed the world three times on the proverbial shoestring, learning as he went. He lives on his own-built boat *Solitaire* in Lymington.

Until this announcement, the OCC had only four honorary members: Sir Robin

Knox-Johnston, Geraldine Wright, Alfredo Lagos and João Carlos Fraga.

Commodore John Franklin said: "Since the club has not elected an honorary member for many years, the general committee felt that our 60th anniversary year would be an appropriate occasion."



BRIAN JENKINS



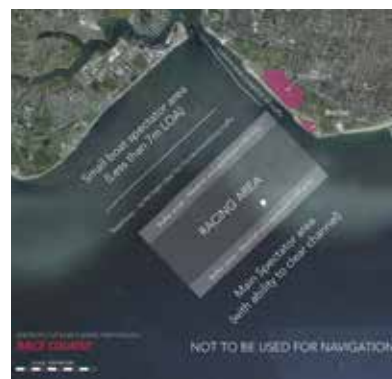
ANDY BEHARRELL

Far left
During his solo triple circumnavigation of the globe in 1987, Jon Sanders pauses off Fremantle to receive fan mail

Left
Les Powles on his boat *Solitaire* of Hamble

POOLE QUAY BOAT

Haven and Port of Poole Marina have been awarded gold anchors by the Yacht Harbour Association, as has Plymouth Yacht Haven. For more on visiting Plymouth, see Gull's Eye on page 50



RNLI airlifts two off Dungeness

TWO PEOPLE WERE taken to hospital by helicopter after their trimaran capsized a mile off Dungeness Point.

Dover Coastguard was alerted by a member of the public on 4 April that two people were in the water, clinging to the upturned hull.

HM Customs cutter *Valiant* followed a red flare that had been fired and stood by the upturned trimaran until Dungeness RNLI arrived to rescue the sailors – a pregnant woman and her partner.

They were taken to hospital by helicopter from the shore,

where they were found to have sustained no injuries.

Bob Giles, of Dover Coastguard, said: "The couple were thrown into the water after their vessel capsized. Both were wearing lifejackets." He added they had AIS on board "so were easy to locate".

THE WESTERN BANKS of the River Hamble have had a makeover. The Royal Southern Yacht Club has built new facilities for its members, including some 70 walkashore berths



THE DISINTEGRATING SEA wall had to be replaced. 530 tonnes of steel have been driven into the Hamble bed and 18,500 tonnes of mud dredged



CONTRACTORS STARTED IN September. The project also gives the RAF Yacht Club next door a new bridge to 10 deep-water moorings



OWL HOUSE

CLUB MEMBERS WILL be able to enjoy the new quarter deck. There's also direct access to boats for wheelchair users



WIKIMEDIA COMMONS/PALIANO

THE PRINCE PHILIP Yacht Haven at RSrNYC is due to be commissioned by the club's Admiral – the Duke of Edinburgh himself – on 4 June



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Chartplotter



Instrument Display



Sailing Features



www.bandg.com

B&G

A Passion for Sailing



Left
Yachts wrecked
at key bluewater
stopover Vanuatu
following
Cyclone Pam



CRUISER AID FOR ISLANDERS

THE STRONGEST EVER recorded storm to hit Vanuatu, Cyclone Pam wreaked devastation on the South Pacific island nation, taking lives and destroying homes, livelihoods and food and water supplies.

After news emerged of the disaster on 13 March, members of the yachting community across the world pulled together to help with the relief efforts.

Vanuatu, which lies east of Australia, is an archipelago of 83 small islands, 65 of them inhabited and many remote and lacking infrastructure. Port Vila, the capital, is a familiar stop for bluewater cruisers and yachts are well-placed to help distribute aid to outlying communities.

The World Cruising Club set up the Vanuatu Cyclone Relief Fund in the immediate aftermath and has already raised \$42,000 (c£28,000).

Of this, \$5,200 (c£3,500) has been given to the 52 employees of Yachting World Marina in Port Vila, helping them to look after their families, and rebuild their devastated homes. All of the employees' houses had their roofs blown off, some houses were destroyed completely and people were left without shelter or food.

Plans are being made to survey all 34 yacht moorings at Port Vila, which were not insured, and to sponsor their repair and renewal and to help meet the cost of repairing marina buildings. Relief funds will be used to pay for supplies of building materials – nails, wires, tools, plastic sheets – which are desperately needed.

WCC's director Andrew Bishop said: "The aim is help rebuild business, and get them

ready to open for the new tourist season, then visitors can return and will spend money in the local economy, securing the jobs and livelihoods of many families."

Elsie from the marina said the donations helped not just the staff but "their whole community around them".

"We are now starting the clean-up project," she said. "The rubbish that has washed up on our beach is incredible: parts of houses, parts of boats."

Other help is being planned for the island of Tanna, where more than 80 per cent of houses and buildings have reportedly been partially or completely destroyed.

Daria Blackwell, spokesman for the Ocean Cruising Club, said that members had been getting in touch asking for information on how they could help.

HOW YOU CAN HELP

- ▶ Donate money: oceanswatch.org
- ▶ seamercy.org
- ▶ shelterbox.org
- ▶ oxfam.org.uk/cyclone_pam
- ▶ WCC: email Andrew Bishop at mail@worldcruising.com
- ▶ Offer aid: Medical Sailing Ministries plans to publish a list of items that would be helpful to take to the remote communities: msm.org.au
- ▶ Keep visiting: cruising-vanuatu.com hosts a wealth of information to help cruising boats that are sailing through

The OCC appealed to its members in the area and is directing those who want to help to local organisations such as Sea Mercy, which is preparing to send sailing boats to join the disaster and relief efforts, and Oceans Watch, a registered charity, which has received NZ\$3,000 (c£1,500) in donations so far. It has used some of that money to pay for an assessment of Fenualoa island in the Temotu group of the Solomons, which were just as badly affected as Vanuatu.

Managing director Chris Bone said they planned to take chainsaws and a mill to help clear fallen trees and debris.

"Our greatest need is experienced skippers and crew to sail our boats from New Zealand to the islands as soon as possible after cyclone season," he added.

Tom Partridge's Hylas 46 *Adina* was being stored in Port Vila Boatyard when the cyclone struck. She was tied down to a cradle and survived. Tom and his partner Susie were in New Zealand at the time but have since returned and are using *Adina* to take materials and aid to outlying villages.

Tom said: "These are people who just want life to continue as normal. The daily sound in Port Vila is one of chainsaws and there is the smell of wood fire smoke everywhere.

"The people here are trying to get on with life. They never ask for help. But each person we ask says they have lost their homes and the situation is getting worse as crops were washed away and people are homeless and hungry. All around is a fear that visitors won't return to Vanuatu."

The message that keeps being repeated by yachties is the need for cruisers to keep visiting Vanuatu, to help re-establish the marine tourism industry there that supports so many people. The ARC's planned visit to Port Resolution on Tanna and to Port Vila will go ahead in July as planned. The WCC has been taking groups of yachts to Vanuatu since 1991.

Ocean Cruising Club member Randall Donofrio, who weathered Pam on a cottage in Vanuatu, and whose yacht *Nightcap* survived, said: "Spare a thought for the people of Vanuatu and make sure you come here this year if you are planning to. The country needs yachties like never before." ✦



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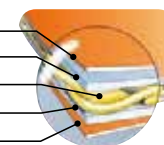
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OYSTER MAKES SUPERYACHT RETURN

Oyster 118

c£13m

A few years after parting company with Turkey's RMK and the project to build 115ft (35m) and 125ft (38.1m) Oyster superyachts, the British builder is gearing up for another 100-plus footer.

The ink has just dried on the contract to build a stretched-transom version of the 115, built on Rob Humphreys' lines and using Oyster's own design team for interior layout. She will be built at the Saxon Wharf site in Southampton, where the fit-out alone will take 18 months

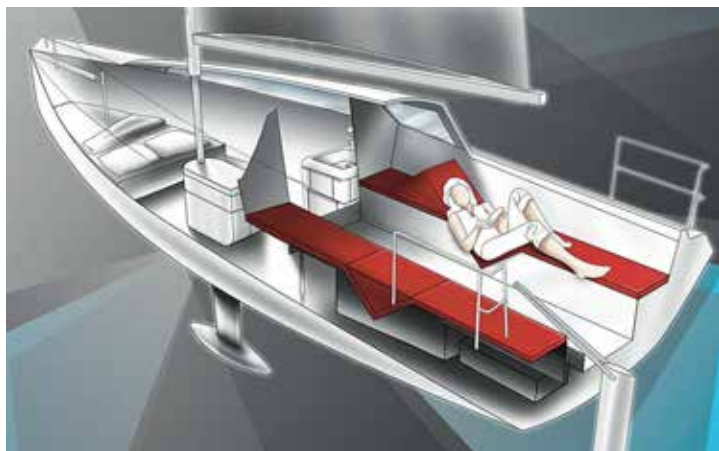
and the hull will completely fill a temporary shed. Oyster MD David Tydeman told *ST* that the build was not part of a strategy to return to superyacht building, but that the right project had come along. "We'll do this project as if it were a big 845." The lines of the cockpit and the glazed deck saloon will be elongated, while she'll have three sets of seascape hull windows.

Hull number one will have a usable volume of 700m³, split into nine cabins to

accommodate up to 12 guests with six crew. Another version of the boat allows for a huge open-plan entertaining space below.

The rig is standard sloop (with a 52m air draught), apparently with a removable inner forestay for a jib. A well on the foredeck can take up to a 6m (19m 8in) RIB, and doubles as a forward seating area at anchor.

► oysteryachts.com



Bente 24

c£18,000

Here is an interesting take on the daysailer from German manufacturer Bente. The yacht is the output of a group of young sailors from the Hannover University of Design. Their initial project was to design a 24ft (7.3m) sailing boat - innovative, reasonably priced and sexy. To achieve that aim, they managed to get the renowned design team of judel/vrolijk on board. Indeed, the plan was so successful that the students found they had a number of yards competing to produce their design and they decided to go with Bente. Did they achieve their original design ambitions? You can judge for yourself.

► bente24.com

Sunbeam 40.1

£195,000

Landlocked Austria might not seem like the most promising place to develop a large cruising yacht, but Sunbeam Yachts has carved out a solid reputation in recent years and the 40.1 is a welcome addition to its expanding range. Designed by the renowned Slovenian naval architects, J&J, this is an interesting take on the modern cruising yacht, featuring a near-vertical transom and moderately deep bulb keel which points towards a sporty side to her nature. Down below she is light, airy and thoroughly modern and the standard of fit-out looks to be excellent. This yacht offers an interesting contrast with the Xc 38 and 42.

► **UK Dealer: DFD Marine**
► sunbeamyachts.co.uk



Neo 350

c£120,000

Italian company Neo Yachts scored a bit of a hit recently with its Neo 400 designed by Bernardo Ceccarelli, which performed very well on the racing circuit and won admiration for both her looks and speed. Its motto is 'fast, comfortable cruising' and given that the 350 looks suspiciously like an out-and-out racer there is little doubt that at least part of this philosophy will be fully borne out. She is 35ft (10.7m) long with a light displacement and generous sail area. Perhaps her most radical feature is that inverted bow, raked slightly aft. There will be cruising and racing versions available with a full carbon rig available on the race version.

► neoyachts.com



Comet Cat 37

£TBC

Comar Yachts has an admirable pedigree stretching back to 1961 and the Italian company is still going strong. In all that lengthy history, however, the company has never experimented with multihulls – that is until now. The 37 has been designed by renowned multihull innovator Marc Lombard and it will be interesting to see how Comar's basic tenets of providing fast, well-appointed yachts translates to the multihull market. No official launch date is available at present, but construction on hull number one is at an advanced stage.

► comaryachts.it

First rate

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Floating wallet

Natural cork for buoyancy

A bit more stylish than your spherical key ring, a floating wallet is surely a must-have item for any cruiser.

15:21 makes products from cork harvested sustainably from Portuguese oaks. The wallet, as well as floating, is water-resistant and resilient to scratches and dirt. Like leather, it will age over time.

The company is named 15:21 after the departure time of a missed train that led to the founder setting up the business. They have also designed a card holder, passport holder and iPhone 6 case – if only that could float, too...



- c£37
- 1521store.com



Trinity House mystery cruise

A charter with a difference on *THV Patricia*

The 282ft (86m) *Patricia* is Trinity House's flagship and travels the waters of England, Wales and the Channel Islands, servicing and maintaining navigational buoys, light vessels and offshore lighthouses.

She has six cabins available to hire for seven or 14-night trips between April and October and has an 'open bridge policy', meaning guests can chat to the officers and crew and closely observe the work that they do. A dedicated passenger chef prepares three meals a day.

The sting in the tail for some will be the fact that, due to *Patricia* being a working ship, itineraries and embarkation and debarkation points are all subject to change at short notice, as emergencies crop up.



- From £1,540 per person per week
- wildwings.co.uk

Creek End, Bosham

Five-bedroom thatched home in sailing country

Creek End is a 3,000sqft detached home that sits on Furze Field Creek in Bosham, West Sussex.

The five-bedroom thatched property is on a plot of about an acre and includes views along the creek from the living room, an annexe and an indoor swimming pool.

It's in the heart of the sailing scene, just two miles from Bosham, with moorings for boats there and at Chichester Marina, Birdham Pool, Dell Quay and Itchenor.

But the best element has to be the private jetty, which gives yacht access to the main Chichester Harbour estuary at high tide.

- £1,890,000
- watersideproperties.com





Mercer chronometer Timepiece valued at £1m

Chronometers – used to keep accurate time at sea – served for hundreds of years as essential aids to navigation that helped establish Britain as a great seafaring nation.

Thomas Mercer was a hugely successful chronometer-maker in the 19th century whose firm's designs, by the 1980s, made up one third of all the chronometers ever built.

The company was revived in 2012 to make high-end timekeepers for the luxury market using precious materials. *Observatory*, with 1,680 components and featuring Mercer's signature and extremely accurate 'detent escapement' mechanism, was three years in the making and is the only one in the world.

- ▶ c£1million
- ▶ thomasmerc.com

Scaled shower curtain Fish-themed fabric



Bring a marine theme into your bathroom (or boat heads) with a fish-scale patterned shower curtain.

This one is 100 per cent cotton duck canvas with corresponding grosgrain top and bottom borders. There are bath towels to match, if co-ordinating is your thing.

- ▶ £98
- ▶ uk.jonathanadler.com

Cardsharp4 pocket knife

Designer blade folds away to credit card proportions

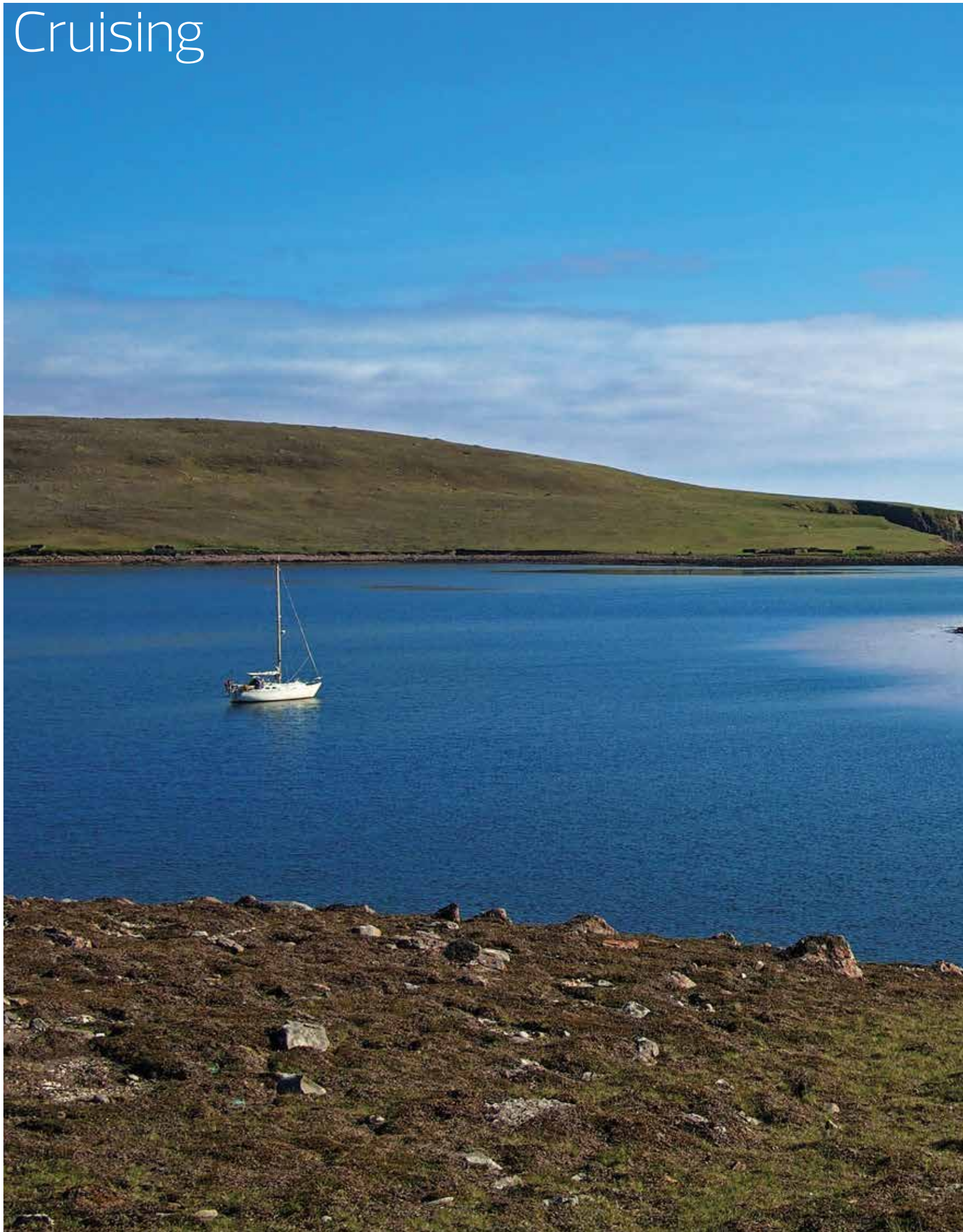
A stunning and simple pocket knife that folds for storage into a credit card shape just 2.2mm thick.

Machined from ultra-light T6 aluminium and steel, the maker says that the Cardsharp4 knife has "excellent rigidity" in both open and closed positions and remains flat when unfolded. The blade, made from 420-series surgical stainless steel, is as sharp as a scalpel and strong enough to cut through a seatbelt – so it could be good to carry for emergencies on the boat. It weighs just 24g, compared with a Stanley knife averaging 150g and a Leatherman at 85g.



- ▶ £55
- ▶ iainsinclair.com

Cruising



Northern Soul

Homeward-bound, artist
Howard Steen captures
the stark beauty of
Shetland and Orkney





Prehistory

Orkney and Shetland are scattered with the remains of prehistoric settlements. In 2007, a hazelnut shell found in excavations in Tankerness on Orkney was dated to around 6700BC, showing that Mesolithic nomadic tribes were there. Skara Brae, Europe's best-preserved Neolithic settlement, is thought to have been inhabited around 3100BC. On Shetland, there are over 5,000 archaeological sites, including the wheelhouse and broch at Jarlshof, ranked as one of the most remarkable ever excavated in the British Isles.

Martha Maria, my Vancouver 27, had been sailing and overwintering on the Norwegian coast for the last three seasons and now it was time to get her acquainted with the skipper's spiritual sailing home in Scottish waters. Strangely none of my regular crew showed much enthusiasm for joining me on an early season 180nM crossing of the North Sea from Norway to Shetland. I was becoming resigned to singlehanding this leg but then remembered Yves, an old climbing and skiing friend from Bordeaux, who had just retired and who I knew might be looking for a new experience.

So it was that towards the end of May I sailed out of the Hardangerfjord with crew in glorious warm, sunny weather while most of the UK down through southern France was enveloped in cold and rain. There was still plenty of snow on the mountains here and I could not resist putting in at Sunndal in a side arm of the fjord to make a two-day ski traverse across the

Above
Sailing down the Hardangerfjord, skis stowed on deck

Below
Leaving winter harbour, Norheimsund

Previous spread
Hamna Voe on Papa Stour

Folgefonna ice cap. After all, the unique Norwegian opportunities for sail-and-ski exploits (see *ST* 196) would soon be out of reach.

Finally at the coast, we waited out strong northwest winds for three days, secure on the island of Stord with its protective outer archipelago, then the right weather window opened and we were off at 6am on a fine, clear morning in June, going along nicely under all sail, heading west close-hauled at 4-5 knots. The coastline receded, but 19 miles out we could still just discern an extensive white expanse bearing 090° – a place now seemingly

a world away which we had skied across less than a week before.

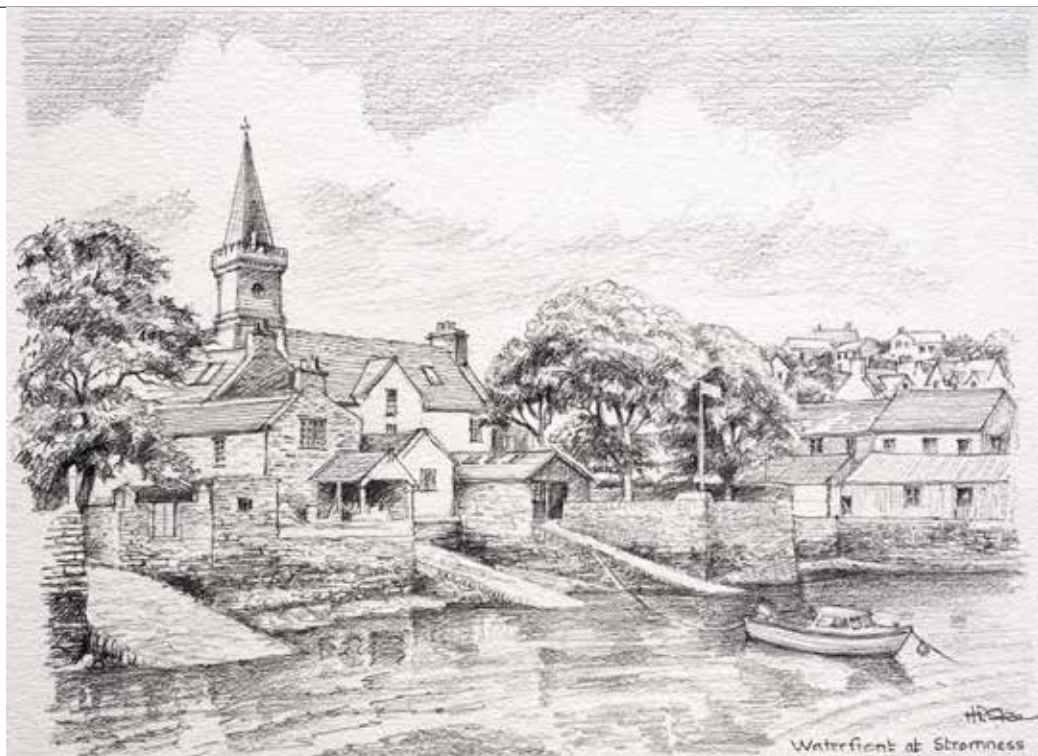
Yves, initially suffering from a spot of 'mal de mer', quickly recovered and made himself useful in all aspects of sailing the vessel but most notably in the galley, demonstrating that it is very good for ship's morale to have a French chef on board.

By early evening, with 30 per cent of the distance sailed, the wind had dropped and we motored on through the short night, alternating two-hour watches to witness a spectacular sunrise over a glassy sea. Our line of crossing was well south of any of the large oilfields and only one distant gas flare to our south, identified as the Frigg field, illuminated the night. Alternately motoring and sailing through the next day, a strong northerly breeze finally piped up for the last 15 miles to Lerwick as the outline of Shetland hills solidified under a fine sunset.

The harbourmaster directed us to a yacht pontoon in the Albert Dock, but entering this at 1am we found the pontoon deep with rafted yachts and with a strong wind beam-on, I was not keen to become part of this



PHOTOS AND ILLUSTRATIONS: HOWARD STEEN



press of grinding boats and fenders. We moored instead for a comfortable night head-to-wind by the inner harbour wall alongside *Swan*, a restored wooden herring drifter (now used for educational/training trips).

Exploring by land

If our first impressions of Lerwick and Shetland were good in the light of the next morning, it only got better as, over the next few days, we did a bit of land-based exploring of the characterful little town with its winding streets and visited parts of mainland Shetland. Many cruisers,

astonishing birdlife. The rugged west coast and cliffs of Esha Ness with its spectacular sea stacks, pinnacles and sea caves is just a short car ride across an island deeply indented with Voes (sea lochs or fjords). Here the sea is never far away and new vistas constantly open up.

But we had also come to experience sailing among these islands, where a look at the chart immediately shows that there is an abundance of secure harbours and anchorages from which to venture out to an often very exposed coastline – the Viking name *Hamna*

Above
Waterfront at Stromness, Orkney

Top right
Westray, Orkney

Above right
Puffin on Orkney's Papa Westray

with a spell of good weather for a foray down the exposed west mainland coast which requires fairly settled conditions.

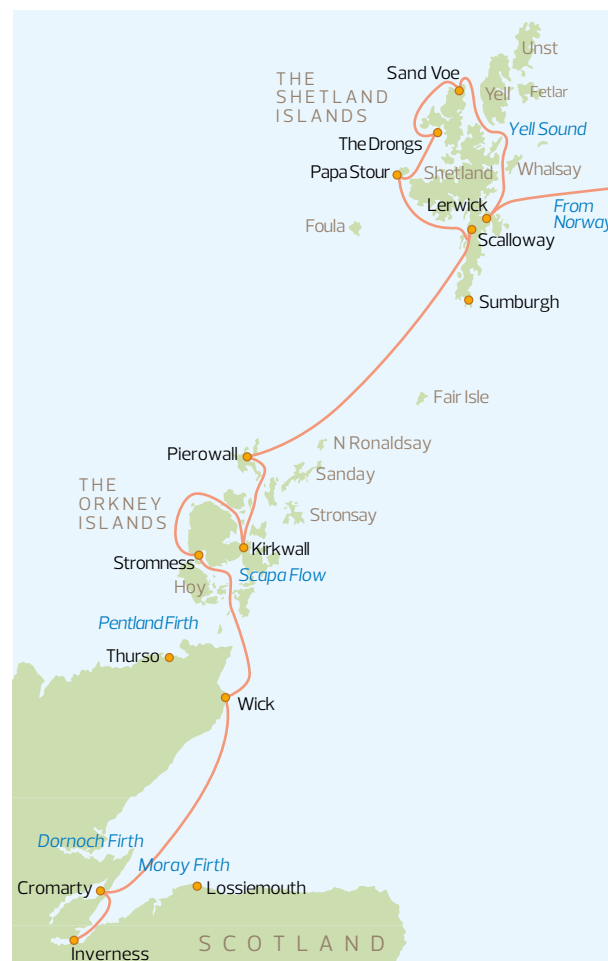
Doing my homework for this trip in the comfort of Lerwick Yacht

'I sailed out of the Hardangerfjord with crew in glorious warm, sunny weather while most of the UK was enveloped in cold and rain'

on reaching these rugged islands with their unique character and culture, are quite content to leave a boat moored in Lerwick and use a rental car or public transport to explore the island. There is much to be said for this. A local tour boat took us a short distance to the impressive sea cliffs on the island of Noss, approaching much closer than I would have dared with *Martha Maria* to view and photograph the

Voe keeps cropping up and means exactly that: a safe harbour. Modern pontoon facilities have also been developed to an excellent standard and are reminiscent of what one finds in Norway. So for the cruising sailor who is not in a rush, an exploration of this fascinating coast with its many inlets and islands is very manageable.

Yves departed for a hopefully warmer France and James arrived, this timing happily coinciding





Martha Maria

Vancouver 27

Built: 1979 by Pheon Yachts

LOA: 27ft (8.2m)

Beam: 8ft 8in (2.7m)

Draught: 4ft 6in (1.4m)

Displacement: 4,065kg (8,960lb)

Sail area (upwind): 352sqft (32.7m²)

Fuel: 120lt (25 gal)

Water: 220lt (123 gal)

Berths: 3

Engine: 21hp Nanni diesel

Club, I met the skipper of a Swedish boat who explained he was en route to the Faroes and then the Northwest Passage – I was immediately impressed. Like us, he was also departing northwards through Yell Sound, where the spring rate runs up to 7 knots, and I mentioned we would be timing our departure to catch the northgoing stream. “Oh,” he replied, “I wasn’t aware of any tides around here.” Well, he was soon better prepared after taking several photos of the pages of my tidal atlas.

Departing Lerwick, we motored to keep our schedule with the tidal gate and by mid-afternoon were passing north of Lunna Holm where Yell Sound opens up.

Top
Sailing past the celebrated natural arch of Dore Holm, Shetland

Above
Alongside the visitor pontoon in Scalloway harbour, Shetland

early morning start. We planned to rendez-vous at sea with friends on *Liberty* who were doing precisely the reverse of our trip to Scalloway.

In almost dead calm conditions we met and briefly shouted greetings near Uyea Baas, a treacherous-looking reef which deserves (and got) a wide berth. Agreeing the pub at which to meet in Lerwick at the end of our respective legs we sailed on down the coast towards Esha Ness and those fantastic offshore rock formations, Dore Holm and the Drongs, which definitely merit a diversion.

The *Hamna Voe* we were aiming for on the small island of Papa Stour

is eight miles to the south of Esha Ness. Passing a narrow entrance, a landlocked lagoon opened up and one can easily imagine why the Vikings favoured this anchorage.

From ashore there is a spectacular coastline to view at close quarters with numerous sea caves – among the UK’s finest and popular with sea kayakers – reaching far inland (where you peer down into enormous sink holes 200 meters inland and realise it is the sea you are seeing 20 meters below).

Finally on the third day we had a good sail close-hauled over flat seas in a nice easterly Force 3 all the way down the coast until we

SAILING HAZARDS

► Strong tidal streams:

Around all of Orkney, in particular, and in a few places around Shetland. Passages need to be carefully planned to take tides into account.

► **Fog:** In Shetland a little less than 10 per cent and in Orkney a little more than 10 per cent chance during summer months

► Rocks:

Similar to the west coast of Scotland, most hazards are well marked but it is necessary to always be aware that the strong tidal streams can sweep a yacht off its intended course

► Harbours and anchorages:

In both groups of islands there are ample places

a yacht can find good shelter in a marina or anchorage. Distances between places of refuge are not great and summer daylight hours are long. In the main centres of Kirkwall, Stromness, and Lerwick a good level of services can be found for yachts.



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approach to Fair Isle's North Haven



could tack eastward into the 'Deeps' to approach Scalloway by the 'middle channel'. This harbour is an important all-weather landfall for the west coast, and offers good shelter.

The town has an excellent museum part-dedicated to the World War Two operation, Shetland Bus, which ferried agents from Scalloway on hazardous sea voyages to support the Norwegian resistance effort.

Orkney bound

After a break of two weeks during which *Martha Maria* was left secure in Scalloway's East Voe marina I was back, joined by James and Rob for the trip across to Orkney involving a passage of some 70 miles southwest across open waters of the Fair Isle Channel. The strong southwest wind which had kept us in harbour for

A slow motorsail got us to the anchorage but we had all had opportunity to calibrate our sea legs against the 'rough' and Rob was the only person left able to stand at the galley in the dreadfully rolly anchorage to produce a welcome hot meal before we all turned in for a short night's rest. We were off at the crack of dawn, motorsailing again into a south-southwesterly Force 4. By mid-morning, the wind having backed, we started really

'We started really sailing, slicing through the waves towards Westray close-hauled at 6 knots while we sheltered behind the sprayhood'

a day was falling and forecast to be favourable for two days, but the sea state remained 'rough'. We couldn't set off directly for Orkney in this, but I decided to use the evening light to head just 10 miles south down the Shetland coast where a shingle spit connecting St Ninian's Island with the mainland forms the anchorage of Bigton Wick, well enough sheltered.

From here we would improve our angle on the wind the next day. It would be our best and only shot at reaching Orkney for a while.

sailing, slicing through the waves towards Pierowall on Westray close-hauled at 6 knots with the wind vane comfortably handling the steering while we sheltered behind the sprayhood. The wind increased further, just the kind of conditions that the Vancouver 27 relishes, and we completed the 62-mile passage within an exhilarating 13 hours.

Just like Shetland, the Orkneys deserve time for exploring both by land and sea. We were going to be stuck in Pierowall by strong



Above
The Old Man of Hoy,
as seen by the writer...

Above left
...and through the
lens of his camera

winds for the next 2½ days so that decided the order of play. Happily, on Westray and its nearby diminutive neighbour Papay (reached by local ferry) there is plenty to see.

In harbour the wind had shifted while we were out on a day walk and *Martha Maria* had been taking it beam-on to the pontoon. I noticed that one of my fenders had 'popped' but a helpful local fisherman had installed two huge ball fenders to keep us safe. We managed to warp the boat into a better position with the wind just off the bow. There are no trees on these islands to modulate the wind and when it blows you had better be ready for it.

Sailing to Kirkwall was delayed, so James took the ferry home as work was calling and I felt bad he'd not had

MORE IMAGES FROM THE NORTHERN ISLES

See more of the writer's pictures in our online gallery and browse our archive of cruising coverage at:
sailingtoday.co.uk

CHARTS AND GUIDES

- ▶ **Imray:** C68
- ▶ **Admiralty:** 219, 1119, 1234, 1239, 1954, 2249, 2250, 3281, 3282, 3283
- ▶ NP209, *Tidal Streams Atlas*
- ▶ *Clyde Cruising Club Sailing Directions and Anchorages for Shetland and Orkney Islands*
- ▶ **Guide of Shetland Marinas:** shetlandmarinas.com/marinas
- ▶ **Guide of Orkney Ports:** orkneyharbours.com/pdfs/PortsHandbook-2013-V5.pdf



such great value from this trip – just getting thoroughly shaken about for a day and a half. Rob and I were finally able to get a good evening sail out of Pierowall in the more sheltered waters between the islands anchoring in Wyre Sound for the night. An early morning departure with some determined motorsailing got us the 10 miles south to Kirkwall before the wind reached the forecast south Force 7. The harbour is nicely sheltered and we had the rest of the day to explore the Orkney capital with its impressive cathedral and narrow winding streets.

We wanted to visit Stromness and the shortest route from Kirkwall is to head northwest out to the west mainland coast via Eynhallow Sound formed between the mainland and the island of Rousay. In Orkney the tides are particularly strong and have to be carefully reckoned with. In many places heavy overfalls can occur in conditions of wind against tide, known locally as ‘rosts’.

Eynhallow Sound, which we were now approaching, has the Burgar Rost and with the recent strong winds we could expect a heavy swell running on the seaward side. About half a mile from the narrows all we could see was a continuous line of white water. Rob looked at me apprehensively but after convincing myself we could turn the boat around if necessary we kept going cautiously until closer inspection revealed a gap

Above
Noup Head
Lighthouse, Westray
Below
Live music at the
Lounge Bar, Lerwick



in the surf and I steered for it. A brief spell of turbulence and we emerged unscathed on the other side. The timing was good to arrive 11 miles down the austere rocky west coast by mid-evening when the start of the flood carried us up into Hoy Sound and a safe harbour at Stromness.

This would be our last stop in Orkney before heading across the sheltered expanse of Scapa Flow and out across the Pentland Firth for mainland Scotland. A delightful and characterful little town, Stromness was a perfect location for our last few days of land-based exploration which took us across to the island of Hoy and around mainland Orkney’s historic sites.

Just like Shetland, these islands have a uniqueness which needs to be experienced and will reward the cruising sailor who is prepared to work with the winds and currents and accept that there may be a few days when it really makes most sense to stay in harbour.



SQUADRON MAN

FORTY YEARS AFTER CUTTING HIS TEETH ON A WILD CRUISE TO CAPE TOWN, ROYAL YACHT SQUADRON COMMODORE **CHRISTOPHER SHARPLES** TELLS SAM FORTESCUE THAT HE'S ABOUT READY FOR ANOTHER ADVENTURE

The Squadron's 22nd Commodore has a lot on his plate. Following election in 2013 for a four-year term, he became responsible for delivering a splendid celebration of the club's bicentenary, this summer. And he is also involved in Ben Ainslie's bid to return the

America's Cup to Britain for the first time since 1851.

"Over the years, the Squadron has become much busier," he agrees. And not least because of initiatives he has launched. "I am particularly keen to address the needs of younger sailors, primarily in their 20s and early 30s, who have less free time due to family and work commitments.

"I have introduced a new programme that provides a mix of social events and sail training on some new J/70s which we have recently acquired due to the generosity of a member."

The young people have to be 'sponsored' by a member, meaning most of them will be children, relatives or friends.

"We're not throwing the doors to The Castle wide open," Christopher says. "It has to be like that because they'll be using the RYS facilities."

Conscious that there is a need to appeal more widely than the core sailing community, he has also launched a Foundation to help young people on the Isle of Wight train for jobs in the marine industry. He hopes to raise several million pounds from members – enough to help 20 or 30 youngsters each year find apprenticeships or complete training. "We will provide finance each year for young people who couldn't do it otherwise."

He says that the Squadron has always been like this – a club with social aims as well as leisure, and a membership running from ordinary people to the very rich. When the Squadron was first formed in 1815, the original 42 members comprised land-owning aristocracy but also Army officers, MPs, vicars, merchants (such as a manufacturer of sea biscuits) – a healthy social mix from all parts of the UK, bound together by a love of the sea.

"The mix has not really changed that much in two hundred years," Christopher says unapologetically. "The whole point of a private club is that the members get to elect their friends whose company they enjoy, whether it is

to have dinner with or perhaps for an extended cruise or yacht race. Of course, this tends to result in like-minded people becoming predominant in any club whilst still leaving room for mavericks such as Captain Scott and Max Aitken, whose personality and achievements are deserving of an invitation to membership on those grounds alone."

For one reason or another the formula seems to work. The Squadron has a waiting list of candidates that extends for several years, including, since the rules changed in 2013, some half-a-dozen women. "I would be surprised if we didn't elect our first lady member within weeks," he says, followed quickly by a caveat about not influencing the ballot. "On 1 June, the date of our actual bicentenary, we are meeting on the same site of our first meeting

in 1815 at the Thatched House Tavern in London."

He recognises that clubs can't stand still – even private members' clubs such as the Squadron. "Clubs come and go; they have to constantly reinvent themselves to survive. The RYS was in dire financial straits after both World Wars." Christopher thinks there's a good chance that the Royal

Yacht Squadron will still exist in some form 200 years from now, as long as it continues to evolve. "But you have to be careful not to throw tradition aside – it's one reason lots of members tell us they prize their membership."

To become Commodore of Britain's most senior yacht club, you have to be quite a distinguished sailor. Christopher seems to fit the bill, with numerous Fastnets, Newport-Bermuda races and no fewer than 45 Cowes Week regattas to his name. But his racing form is not why he was invited to join the Royal Yacht Squadron back in 1973, at the tender age of 27.

Cape Town or bust

Like many keen sailors, he grew up on and around boats. When Christopher was a young teenager, his father had first a 26ft South Coast One Design, then a larger 32ft wooden sloop followed by a 36ft Excalibur. "We pottered around the Solent and went cruising in the West Country and I have very fond memories of cruising in north Brittany, before the days of marinas."

'Clubs come and go; they have to constantly reinvent themselves to survive'



His father had bought a Gallant 53 named *Alaunt of Corfe* and at the age of 23 Christopher was given permission to take the large boat on his own from the Hamble down to Weymouth. After that he nipped across the Channel to Cherbourg with some friends. "Navigation was dead reckoning and the B&G Homer Heron which gave bearings to onshore radio beacons. We were complete amateurs and were bowling along under spinnaker across the Channel towards the French coast in a rather thick mist, with visibility well under a mile when one of the crew, Timmy Guinness who was claiming to be an expert using the basic navigation kit, came up on deck ashen-faced to announce dramatically that by his calculations we were now three miles inland near a church! We doused the spinnaker immediately just as the forts on the Cherbourg breakwater

loomed into view about half a mile dead ahead; most certainly more by good luck than good management."

At the age of 24, he'd been working for six years in the sugar brokerage business and was, by his own admission, "keen for some adventure". He had heard about a new race from Cape Town to Rio, due to depart in 1973, and decided that he wanted to take part. His boss agreed to give him a sabbatical year, so all he needed was crew... and a boat.

"Not thinking he would agree for a moment, I asked my father if I could borrow *Alaunt* without disclosing what I had in mind. He said 'Sure, do you want to go to Weymouth again?' When I revealed my intention to set sail from the Hamble to Cape Town and then Rio and back again, having never done more as skipper than one trip to Weymouth and another to Cherbourg, to my great surprise, he agreed."

Above
Christopher at the
helm of borrowed
Baltic 42 Going
Concern on
passage to Poole

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Somehow he talked four friends into taking sabbaticals as well and set sail from the Hamble in May 1972. They spent a couple of months in the Med, put into the Canary Islands and the Cape Verdes then made the 4,600-mile hop to Cape Town. Christopher recorded the passage for an article later published in *Yachting World*, but highlights included romping along at 9 knots in the Horse Latitudes and endless tins of ravioli. “I was the oldest on board at 25 by the time we reached Cape Town and they gave us a grand welcome.”

They completed the race, but tragedy intervened soon afterwards, during the return from Rio. Christopher and his crew were on passage for Bermuda to meet his father, Richard, who had taken up the governorship of the island the year before. As Richard walked with his dog after dinner on 10 March 1973, he was gunned down by an assassin for what was later discovered to be a black power group.

Christopher is understandably reluctant to talk about this period of his life, but on his return to Britain, he was invited to join the Squadron by family friend Ted Heath. Christopher and his father had taken the then Prime Minister sailing a few years earlier, when they were entering RORC cross-Channel events. “I recall this was the first time he had been on a cruiser/racer. He once told me this is what gave him the ‘sailing bug’ that led to *Morning Cloud*.”

High flyer

The young man decided at this point that he would never work again for someone else. Instead, he set himself up as a commodities trader. “I had learned the ropes already and one thing lead to another. Episodes in life give you the confidence to do things you didn’t know you could do.”

He is similarly modest about his subsequent success as an entrepreneur – first in commodities trading, and later in software companies such as Fidessa, now in the FTSE250, and Digital River, which rode high in the dotcom bubble of the 1990s. His firms have created thousands of jobs, but he puts some of it down to luck. “I was there at the start of the tech revolution and I could spot opportunities to use it to deliver services people wanted. I don’t know the first thing about computer coding.”

Work has dominated his adult life, and he admits that he hasn’t done as much sailing as he might have liked over the past 30 years. “But more than many”, he adds quickly.



Besides the regular racing, there was a stint on charter in the BVI and the Stockholm Archipelago last year. Now, he’s planning to join the RYS rally to Burma next year, which is expecting up to 50 people in 12 boats chartered from Thailand. “Burma is opening up – there is now a trodden path, although you need a special licence to cruise there.”

And once he’s finished his term as Commodore, he has grander plans still. “I want to cross the Pacific,” he says simply. That would be difficult at present, as his only boat is a 42ft GRP motor launch used regularly for RYS purposes. But he’s fixing his sights on the Tropics. “Having sailed the Atlantic again two years ago in the trade wind belt, I have no doubt that the warm weather and deep blue seas with the stars ‘to steer her by’ is an experience that is hard to beat.”

But first, he has to see out his term as Commodore. I ask him whether he’d rather sail a J-Class or a modern America’s Cup foiling cat, and he laughs. “The J-Class are coming to Cowes this summer as part of our Invitational Regatta in July and of course the Squadron is very involved with Sir Ben Ainslie as we are the challenging club for the America’s Cup. So maybe I will even get the chance to do both!”

Either way, he’s hoping for an emotional finale in Bermuda in June 2017, a few months before he steps down. “Given my family connections with the island, it will be the ultimate icing on the cake when hopefully Ben wins the cup in Bermuda for Great Britain and the trophy returns to its original home at our RYS Castle in Cowes.”

Left
Arriving in Cape Town on *Alaunt* in 1973

Above
With the crew of *J/109 Inspira* – 5th overall in her class at Cowes Week 2014

Below
Showing future PM Ted Heath the ropes in 1967 with father Richard at the helm



Broadside

AFTER MANY YEARS AS A DEDICATED MONOHULL OWNER, **LANCE STEVENS** HAS RECENTLY SWITCHED TO A CATAMARAN. HERE HE BUSTS SOME MULTIHULL MYTHS

Myth: Modern cruising catamarans are all about 'country-cottage' accommodation and consequently do not sail well.

Truth: Just as with monohulls, there is a very broad choice of design and construction methods employed by the different catamaran builders. Some catamarans do have extremely spacious living space and a rather bland performance. This is not a bad thing as it suits some owners and many charterers very well.

However, boatbuilders such as Gunboat in the US and Nautitech in France have shown that by combining the skills of a top naval architect with high-quality, weight-saving construction methods, truly outstanding performance can be achieved. The catamaran's bonus is that these boats feature accommodation that is way superior to a similar length monohull.

Myth: Berthing costs are much higher.

Truth: A great many marinas and harbours charge on LOA exactly the same as for a monohull. The odd marina charges more, but these are easily avoided. One of the many advantages of a modern multihull is the comfort at anchor; the boat will not roll like a monohull and one also has a super tender on davits. Many more nights of a typical cruise can be spent lying to an anchor or a mooring buoy, with little or no cost and most often, in peaceful solitude.

Myth: A beamy boat must be hard to manoeuvre.

Truth: Certainly upon arriving on board for the first time, the beam is a little daunting. But, just as the first time you drive a rental van instead of your car, it is surprising how quickly you adapt. The key to manoeuvring a cat is the fact that you have two engines a large distance apart. Preparing to leave a pontoon mooring, you put the offside engine into ahead with sufficient revs that you can sense that the forward fenders are being squashed against the pontoon. With the engine holding the cat firmly against the pontoon, the springs and bowlines can be removed and stowed. Finally, slip the engine into neutral and release the stern line. Now, by juggling the two engines



'Multihulls can glide over waves in a manner that confounds monohull sailors'

in forward and reverse, you can depart from the pontoon without fuss or drama.

Returning to the pontoon is equally easy. Once the stern line has been made off ashore, the offside engine is put into ahead and the cat presses her fenders against the pontoon while you set the bow line and springs

Myth: Cats are dangerous in storm conditions.

Truth: Quite the contrary. Multihulls are much less vulnerable to big waves; they glide over the top of malevolent waves in a manner that confounds monohull sailors. This über-buoyant behaviour, which results from the lack of ballast keel and the fact that the footprint is so large, also means that when running before a gale, overtaking waves do not force the cat into an uncontrollable surf.

The rig geometry with aft-swept shrouds set behind the spreaders allows the main to be reefed or doused even when running downwind in a gale.

A perfect boat then?

Well, I have never found a better all-weather cruising boat. Comfort, stability and fast passage speed is unique. Shoal draught adds another dimension.

But if we want to race, sail in restricted waters, or just love the row-away factor of a sleek, elegant sloop, we will be better off with a decent monohull.

Six months after I first sailed a catamaran, my Nautitech 40 still delights and amazes me with her wonderful manners and performance.

There's plenty of room for my sons to bring friends. My sailing fix is sated by regular double-digit boat speeds. And her level, stable platform, which stops the dog (and the wife) sliding around, allows the rest of the family who aren't engaged in sailing to relax. ✦

LANCE STEVENS is a retired entrepreneur, who as a hobby is a shareholder in Hamble-based Key Yachting, distributors of J Boats, Grand Soleil, Tofinou and Nautitech catamarans.

YOUR VIEW

**Monohull or catamaran:
what are your views/
experience?**



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Sailing Today is delighted to launch its very own awards to recognise the best the marine industry and the cruising world have to offer.

During the summer, we'll be asking our readers to vote online for their favourites in a wide range of categories, including new boats, multihulls, cruising grounds, marinas, sailing gear, clothing, personalities and more.

Once we've counted the votes, we aim to announce the winners of our inaugural 2015 awards at this year's Southampton Boat Show

(11-20 September), but in the meantime, we're asking for your help to nominate outstanding clubs or individuals in the categories opposite.

It could be a club that is busy expanding or putting on rallies to new and exciting places; a sailor halfway around the world with some astonishing pictures; or a local cruiser who has achieved great things under sail. You can nominate yourself or your club – or use your nomination to bring someone else to our attention.

Just get in touch with us before 1 June by emailing awards@sailingtoday.co.uk

1 Cruising sailor

Who has accomplished astonishing seafaring feats over the past year? We want to hear from you if you know an ambitious bluewater cruiser or an enterprising coastal sailor. They might be a figure of global stature whose achievements are well documented, or someone who has performed wonders in your local waters. Get in touch!



2 Yacht club

Often the heart of local sailing communities, yacht clubs play a key role. Socially and on the water, they galvanise sailors, organise races and improve the knowledge and awareness of members. We want to hear from you if you think your local cruising club, or your club's cruising division, has taken great strides forward this year. It could be a brilliant line-up of winter speakers, an ambitious summer rally or exciting new facilities.



3 Cruising photograph

Sailing opens up vistas and seascapes that our landlubberly neighbours can only dream of. If you've been on a cruise, long or short, you've probably taken some pictures you're proud of. Now's your chance to get them in front of a wider audience. Send us your top picture or pictures (no more than five, please) that illustrate cruising sailing at its best. It doesn't have to be from a far-flung destination, but it should embody the essence of sailing.



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With its bold, muscular looks, Hanse's new 455 is proving to be one of the big winners of 2015. We sent *Sam Jefferson* to find out why

Über modern



To write that 45ft (13.7m) is the new 35ft (10.6m) is, on the face of it, patent nonsense. But when it comes to yachts there is at least an element of truth lurking within this gobbledigook. A few years ago, a 35-footer was about the standard size for a cruising yacht – the happy medium that many of us aspired to.

Times have changed, however, and I would venture to suggest that nowadays that measure of the average-sized yacht we aspire to own is closer to 45ft.

Which brings us rather neatly to the new Hanse 455 – launched towards the end of last year by the German boatbuilder with the aim of cornering this lucrative sector of the market. On recent evidence

you'd have to say it has done just that, with sales of the yacht in the UK in 2015 well into double figures.

So what's the secret of this success? Well, step aboard the Hanse and the first thing that pretty much slaps you around the face is this yacht's modernity. The design house of Judel/Vrolijk has been inextricably linked to Hanse for years and has never been shy of a spot of modernity. Even



so, the new 455 comes as a surprise: with her plumb bow, vertical transom and hard, angular coachroof, this yacht comes from a school of naval architecture that is almost brutalist. This is a yacht where the designer has defiantly raised a Teutonic middle digit at the accepted rules of aesthetics and pulled off an unlikely triumph.

With the exception of the soft turn of her bilge, there's barely a

curve on show and if you marry that with the relatively high topsides and huge rectangular portlight amidships, you would think that this vessel would have all the beauty and elegance of a Sherman tank.

The weird thing is that somehow it all works: the 455 looks aggressive, all right, but there's also an unmistakeable stylishness about her. I was left reflecting that if you

are going to buy a new yacht, it might as well look new and the 455 certainly does. Brand, spanking new.

Yet in one way, the 455 is evolutionary rather than revolutionary, as she is the natural development of the Hanse 445. She therefore shares a good many of her predecessor's attributes: plenty of beam carried well aft, masses of volume and Hanse's trademark

self-tacking headsail set-up married to a tall, powerful rig. Yet this is no simple repackaging job, for the 455 is a redesign from the keel upwards. She's a fraction longer, a tad heavier and her sail plan has also been tweaked, with greater area added to the jib and removed from the main. Despite these changes, she shares her predecessor's reputation for excellent build quality combined with a decent turn of speed.

Options abound

Despite the fact that Hanse is unashamedly mass-produced, the company prides itself on having developed what it terms 'mass customisation' which may sound a little sinister, but basically means that each yacht is custom-made to the

Stepping aboard there's no question that the first thing that hits you is the acre of space available. In an era of fat-bottomed yachts this is nothing new, but it still has the capacity to surprise. The reconfiguration of the cockpit compared to the old 445 means there is even more room, with the benches moved back to give yet more space.

Despite this, the presence of a sturdy cockpit table with ample handholds prevents the area feeling too wide open. Locker space is adequate rather than immense, but the addition of a pair of helmsman's seats with a clever deck shower/sink compartment to port and the gas locker to starboard adds stowage absent on the 445 while there is a huge locker behind the anchor locker which could happily

Spick and span

Hanse is a stickler for neat decks and has taken pains to conceal control lines under the deck



'There is a huge locker abaft the anchor locker which could happily swallow up whole dinghies if required'

order of a client and there is a plethora of options to choose from. There are four cabin layouts on offer and an endless choice of trim and upholstery. Below the waterline you also have a choice of the standard T-shaped foil, with a depth of 2.5m (8ft 3in), or you can have an L-shaped keel of the same depth or a shallower version which reduces the draft to 1.82m (6ft).

swallow up whole dinghies if required. The bathing platform is huge and slips down on its hydraulic strut with a pleasing hiss and conspicuous lack of effort. There is also a liferaft locker tucked in cunningly, which provides a clever solution to an old problem. With the platform raised, you are enclosed within the cockpit and feel very secure.

One factor that makes the hard lines of the 455 look more purposeful than clunky is the low, uncluttered coachroof with the halyards run beneath the deck. This area is also awash with flush hatches and the overall impression is sleek and ultra modern. In addition to giving the decks a delightfully clean, uncluttered feel this also ensures that sight lines forward are excellent. The side decks are also wide with a nicely moulded solid toe rail. The lack of jib cars makes for what amounts to a wide avenue for you to stroll along without stubbing your toe.

Hanse has long championed a running rigging set up which leads all important lines via channels set into the coachroof and cockpit mouldings which re-emerge through clutches set within reach of the helmsman. The lines are then tidied away into rope bins situated outboard of the wheels. Combine that with a self-tacking jib and Lewmar electric winches and you have a great recipe for singlehanding.

You can trim the mainsheet, kicker, headsail, you name it, without



PHOTOS: JOE MCCARTHY

Straight lines 1

Other than the bilge, the 455 is composed of bold, straight lines with just a hint of reverse sheer

Beam aft 2

Carrying so much beam aft creates volume below and helps the boat dig in upwind



leaving the helming position. It really is incredibly easy and my only criticism of the system, garnered from a transatlantic crossing I did on a Hanse 461 with the same set up, is that the rope bins can end up in a horrible spaghetti-like tangle of ropes without careful management.

Light airs

The only thing that remained was to take the Hanse out for a spin and we were unfortunate to find fickle airs with the wind peaking at around 10 knots. Nevertheless, this was a good opportunity to test her cruising chute and, despite the modest conditions, the yacht was eager to show herself off.

Hanse has long had a reputation for providing a big, powerful rig and the 455 is no exception. Most of the work is done by her huge main and if you were to reef her down you would almost have the third reef in before

you started to ponder taking in a roll or two of her 95 per cent blade jib. For all that, she is well-balanced and poised. There is a good reason for this. Unlike most yachts fitted with a self-tacker, the Hanse has been designed specifically to carry this type of headsail so her mast position – stepped further aft than the norm – is optimised for this purpose.

And it shows in her handling. Upwind the big mainsail/small headsail combo works an absolute treat and that deep keel and deep, high-aspect rudder ensure she tracks well, with around 40 degrees proving to be the optimum angle off the wind to keep her moving in the light airs. Beating into the breeze also demonstrated just how simple life was with the self-tacker and we rolled through the tacks with minimal fuss or effort. The big rig also proved a powerful performer on a beam reach and it was only as

we sailed deeper that the massive main started to blanket the headsail.

Hanse has, however, countered that problem by providing a cruising chute which is cut almost like a Code Zero and in the light airs worked well enough in anything up to a close reach, providing the added muscle required to keep her moving.

To Hanse's credit, this sail was simple to handle and set up and would allow many cruising sailors to get over their phobia of putting up the kite. Our main had slab reefing, which is the standard set-up and, although there was no reason to throw in a reef, I imagine that this might involve a bit of rope-juggling as you eventually run out of winches for ropes. It's no big deal as the clutches are easily to hand, but it does involve a modicum of pre-planning. So in a way what you gain in the simplicity and cleverness of the system compared with the

TO SEE VIDEO of this test and many other new boat tests, large and small, click on to:



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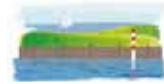


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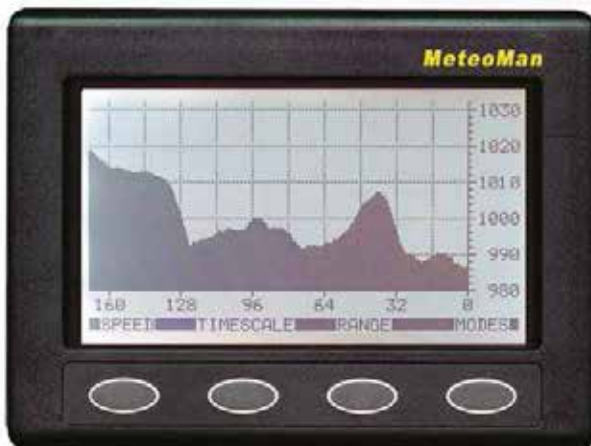
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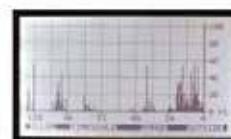
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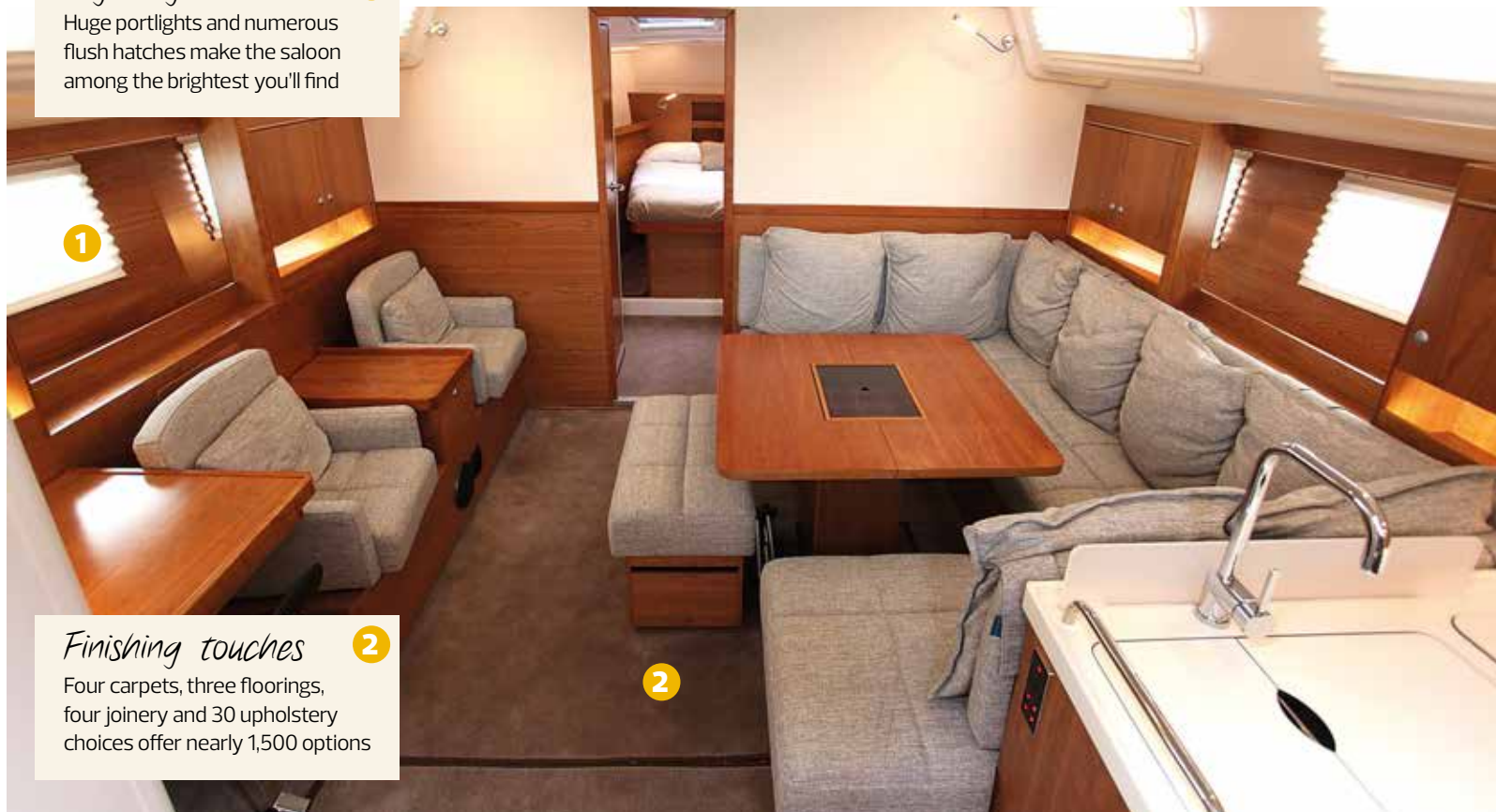


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Lighting

1

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Finishing touches

2

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standard set up, you also lose, and it boils down to personal preference.

Under power she was utterly predictable and extremely well-behaved. The 53hp Volvo Penta had more than enough grunt to shove her along with minimum fuss and very little racket to boot. There are bow-thrusters, which I am sure would be a boon in a strong crosswind, particularly when you take into account those high topsides, but in the light airs we encountered they were not even vaguely necessary.

Airy and light

Head below down very thoughtfully angled companionway steps, and the über-modern theme continues. There is no compromise here – you'll either like it or you won't. The ambience put me in mind of an extremely plush hotel room and the huge U-shaped seating area around the saloon table with its great mounds of soft furnishings just begged to be jumped on. I resisted, for fear that the representative from Hanse who was helping me to test the boat might think I was a little bit strange.

Yet the most striking feature was the staggering amount of light that

Hanse has managed to flood through the yacht. A pair of huge skylights in the main saloon would suffice for most, but then there are also the massive rectangular portlights set amidships and clever positioning of mirrors doubles the light, which simply pours in and shows off those clean, modern furnishings to perfection. I can honestly say I have never been aboard a yacht this light.

It also feels absurdly roomy down here and that theme continues when you head forward into the master cabin, which is positively palatial. You could fit two doubles into this space, which is fortunate, because that is one of the configurations



available. An unusual feature is the separate shower room, which is situated to starboard with the heads to port. This is a nice touch and frees up the heads. Again, two skylights provide huge amounts of light. Inevitably the two aft cabins are less regal. Nevertheless, they were still far roomier and lighter than the average.

The galley is set to starboard and comes with a number of optional finishes, but the main factor is that it is very sensibly laid out with plenty of places to brace yourself against and everything nicely to hand. Plus, without wishing to sound high maintenance, I always like to have both an upright and a chest fridge just for ultimate convenience. Hanse has obliged. ✨

SAM'S VERDICT

The last yacht I tested was the somewhat retro Rustler 37 and the Hanse 455 is a kind of antithesis of that boat. Yet it's a case of horses for courses with these things and, if you want a modern yacht, you might as well make sure it's thoroughly modern. The 455 most certainly is.

Not only that, but she performs well, is extremely docile and simple to handle with that self-tacking jib, and boasts what must be the lightest, airiest and roomiest accommodation in her class. I also like the fact that Hanse is always looking to innovate and is not afraid to try new ideas. That said, I think its system of running all lines and clutches back to the helmsman is not only one of the yacht's great strengths, it is also its weakness. For, in simplifying things and giving the 455 those lovely, uncluttered decks you do end up with the risk of a snarl-up.

Ultimately, though, there is a good reason this yacht is selling well and that is because it has to be one of the leaders in its class for comfort, ease of handling and versatility.

PERFORMANCE: ★★★★★

COMFORT: ★★★★★

BLUEWATER: ★★★★★

THE SPEC

PRICE AS TESTED: £200,000
BASE PRICE: £151,000 (EX-VAT)

Length overall: 45ft 7in (14.0m)

Length waterline: 40ft (12.2m)

Beam: 14ft 4in (4.4m)

Draft: 7ft 4in (2.2m), standard,
5ft 8in, shallow draft

Displacement: 25,570lb,
(11,600kg)

Ballast: 7,716 lb (3,500kg)

Ballast ratio: 31.8 per cent

Engine: Volvo Penta, 53hp

Fuel: 220lt (48.4gal)

Water: 450lt (99.0gal)

Sail Area

Main: 635sqft (59m²)

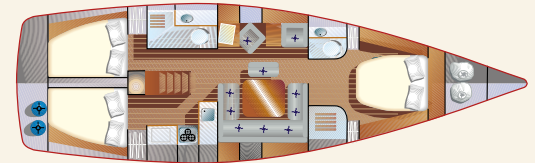
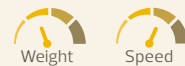
Jib: 476sqft (44m²)

PERFORMANCE

Disp/LOA: 178

Sail area/disp: 20.4

AVS: 155°



For a fuller explanation of stability and performance figures see sailingtoday.co.uk

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IF THE HANSE 455 ISN'T RIGHT FOR YOU...



DUFOUR 45 GRAND LARGE

PRICE: £165,000 (EXC VAT)

Dufour is another brand with a notably progressive ethos – its 450 is also strikingly modern and shares a similarly voluminous hull. Perhaps the most striking thing of all about the 450, however, is that she boasts a wine cellar and shoe cuddies in her bilge.

dufour-yachts.com

craftinsure quote: £637.78



BENETEAU OCEANIS 45

PRICE: (BASIC) £154,000 (EXC VAT)

Another smart offering from the masters of mass production. The Oceanis features that distinctive 'spoiler' arrangement over the cockpit for the mainsheet which, like it or loathe it, is certainly practical. The 45 is getting on a bit now but in 2012 she was elected European Sailboat of the Year in the family cruiser category.

beneteau.co.uk

craftinsure quote: £590.13



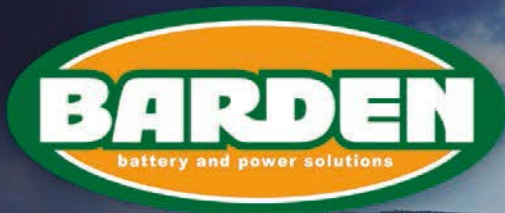
BAVARIA CRUISER 46

PRICE: £150,000 (EXC VAT)

Hanse's big German rivals from the Black Forest have developed the cruiser 46, a vessel which also provides light, spacious accommodation, a huge cockpit and easily handled set-up. Meanwhile, her twin rudder promises excellent control even in boisterous conditions.

clippermarine.co.uk

craftinsure quote: £572.80



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Moor for less....
on the South Coast

A full-page background image showing the deck of a sailboat looking forward towards the horizon. The sun is low in the sky, creating a warm orange and yellow glow over the dark blue sea. The boat's mast, rigging, and a large sail are visible in the foreground.

Atlantic Odyssey

We surveyed 46 boats on the ocean-crossing rally. *Emma Bamford* and *Sam Fortescue* report on what worked – and what didn't

Some 1,500 sailing boats are reckoned to cross the Atlantic westwards to the Caribbean each year, and more than ever are choosing to do so with an organised rally.

The ARC has put on extra routes, Sailing Rallies has launched

its Christmas rally and Jimmy Cornell has his Atlantic Odyssey.

As boats get bigger and easier to handle, there's more and more gear that would-be Transatters can install to make the crossing safer and more comfortable. We went out to Marina Lanzarote to see off the Atlantic Odyssey on its 2,800nm voyage

to the excellent natural harbour of Le Marin in Martinique. And we surveyed their views on arrival.

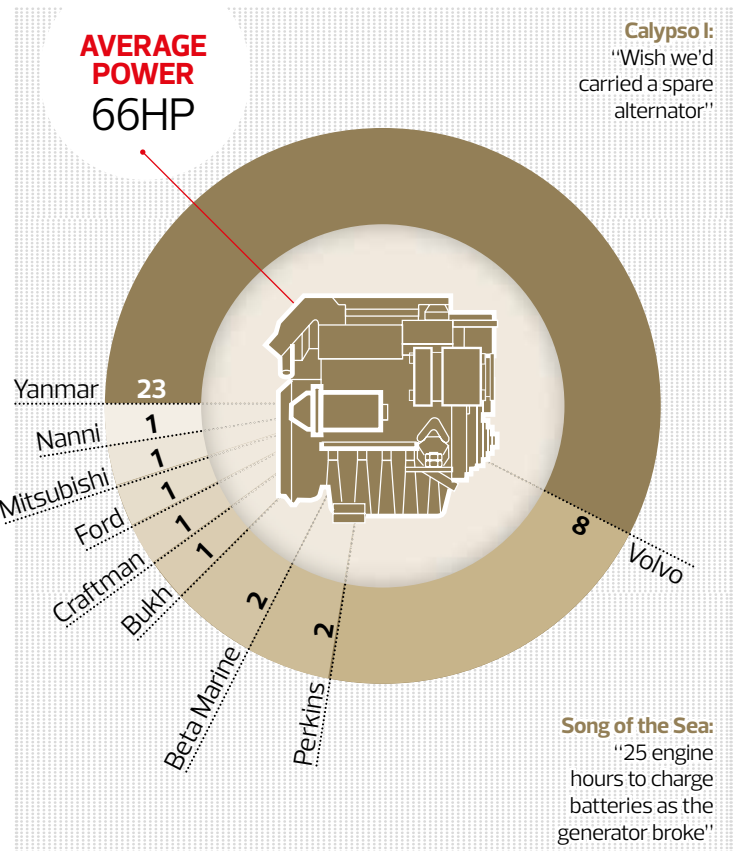
In all, 46 boats sailed with the Odyssey. Here, in Part I, are their responses on sailing kit and rig selection. There's plenty of inspiration for a bluewater sailor and lots of detail on what was good – and what wasn't.

Engines

There's not much you can do about your boat's engine, so this category isn't strictly a question of cruisers' choice; the engine installed is the one that you'll do the Atlantic crossing with. But it's interesting to look at what is specc'd with the sort of boats in which people are making long ocean passages.

Of the 41 boats that responded, 56 per cent had a Yanmar installed – many more than the 20 per cent with Volvo Penta engines. The Yanmars averaged 68hp, too, whereas the Volvos averaged a more modest (but still decent) 60hp.

Outside these two dominant players, Beta Marine and Perkins were the most commonly-found engines. The average power was 66hp for an average boat length of 45ft, suggesting that a number of boats had gone for overrated engines.

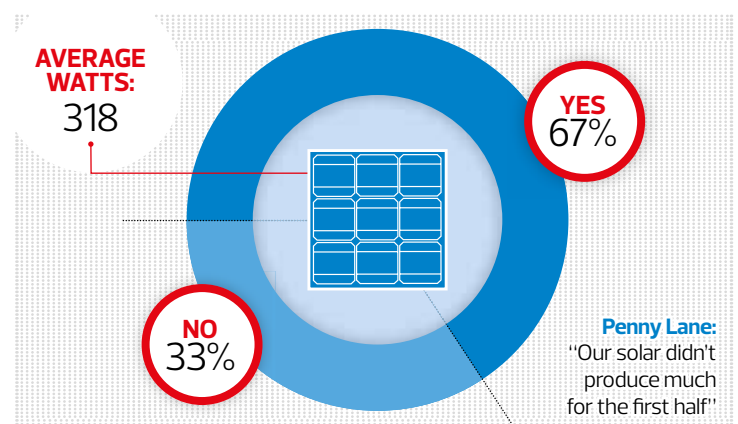


Bluewater kit

Among the biggest questions facing an ocean cruiser is how to keep the lights on and the beers cold when far from land for weeks at a time. For most boats, except for top-spec, brand-new bluewater yachts, that is going to require some detailed preparation and installation of new kit. Only one boat relied on engine alone for recharging their batteries, and they seemed to regret it. Several boats took the view of Malö 37 *Kristine*: "We wish we'd had more energy supply – a tow-gen or a wind genny."

Then there's the question of whether to install a power-hungry watermaker and windvane self-steering.

SOLAR PANELS



At least two-thirds of the boats in the Odyssey had solar panels fitted to help cover some of their power requirements. Wattage of the panels ranged from 64W to an astonishing 800W, potentially capable of covering the entire power needs of the boat during daylight hours.

The average was just over 300W of panels, with mixed reports on their effectiveness. A typical comment came from *Penny Lane*, where they would have liked another power source, "perhaps a tow-gen". Several boats complained of low output from solar panels in the cloudy early days of the rally.

PART II next month

Read our Atlantic survey findings on electronics and comfort aboard

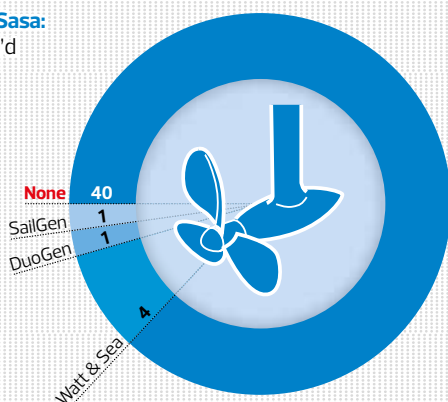


Left
The Page family of
Discovery 55 Miss Behaving

TOW-GEN

Hapa Na Sasa:

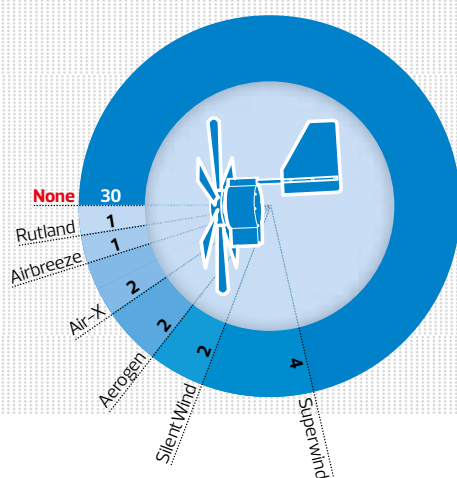
"Wish we'd carried a sail gen"



Though promising in tests, very few of this year's crop of boats carried a tow-gen. Of the six that did, two-thirds had installed units from **Watt & Sea**, with one **DuoGen** and one **SailGen**. Feedback was sharply split between those that had managed to install the equipment

successfully, and those who were dogged by problems. The Watt & Sea 600 can provide 120W of power at a leisurely 5 knots or the full 600W at a more punchy nine knots of boat speed. Several boats said they wished they had had a tow-gen for the crossing.

WIND GENERATOR

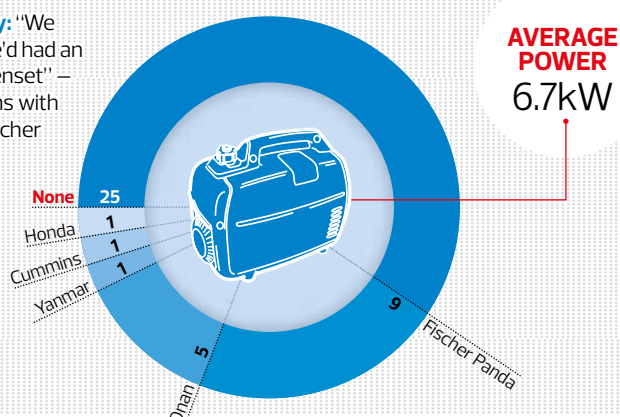


Interestingly, wind generators were also relatively rarely installed on the Odyssey boats – just 12 had them. The **Superwind** was

the most popular model, on four boats, followed by the **SilentWind** and the **Aerogen** on two apiece. Feedback on all was good.

DIESEL GENSET

Serenity: "We wish we'd had an extra genset" – problems with their Fischer Panda



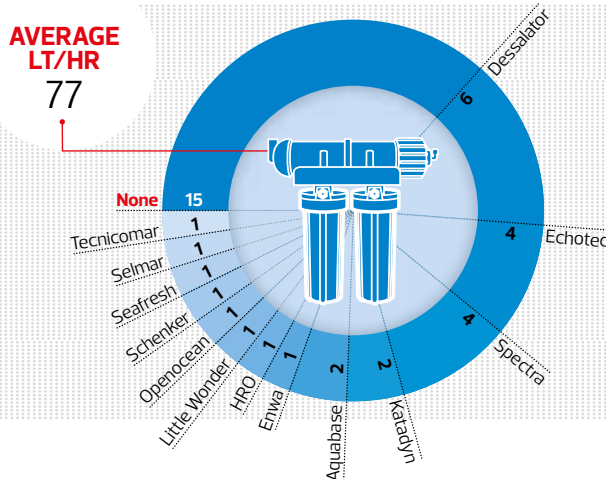
Perhaps reflecting the growing size and complexity of long-distance cruising boats, more carried diesel generators than wind generators – 17 in total.

Fischer Panda units were the most popular, representing 53 per cent of those carried, but users reported some dissatisfaction with their performance.

The average rating was 2.7, where 1 is best and 5 is worst. *Song of the Sea's* generator broke, forcing them to rely on engine charging instead.

By contrast, **Onan** units were carried by 29 per cent of the boats and users rated them 1.4 on average. Most people carried a relatively small 6.5kW unit.

WATERMAKER



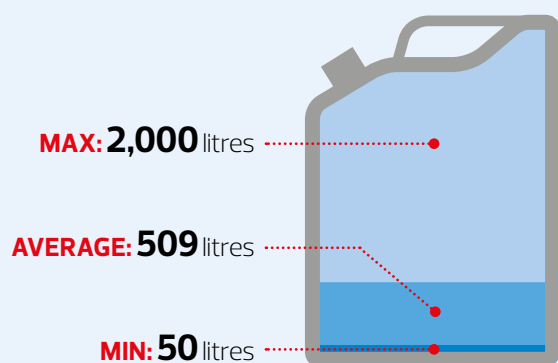
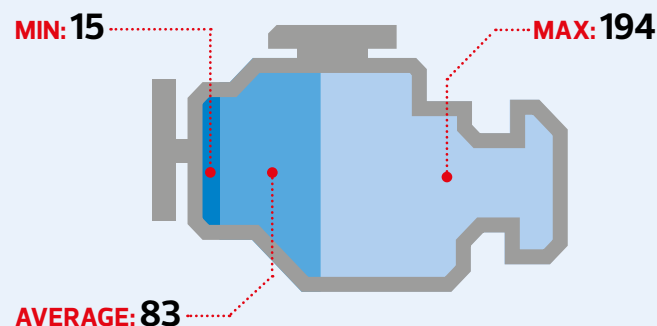
France-based **Dessalator** was the surprise leader in our survey, with six of the 27 boats fitted with watermakers carrying one of their models. After that, **Spectra** and **Echotec** polled equally with four units apiece, then Switzerland's **Katadyn** with two.

Not all boats gave us detail on which model they had used, but of those that did, the average

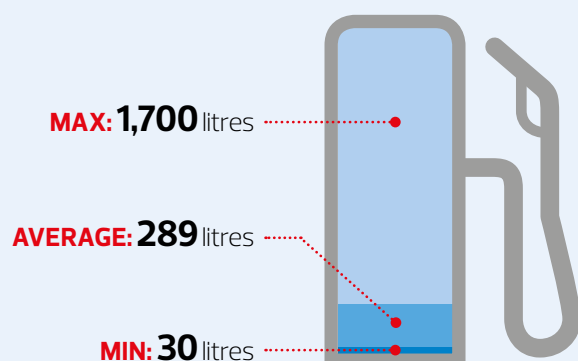
capacity was a weighty 77 litres per hour, pointing to the tendency to heavier water use and more power-intensive equipment during crossings. A typical 60-litre/hr watermaker draws 32A.

Interestingly, a watermaker was on more wish lists than any other item when participants were asked what they wished they could have had aboard.

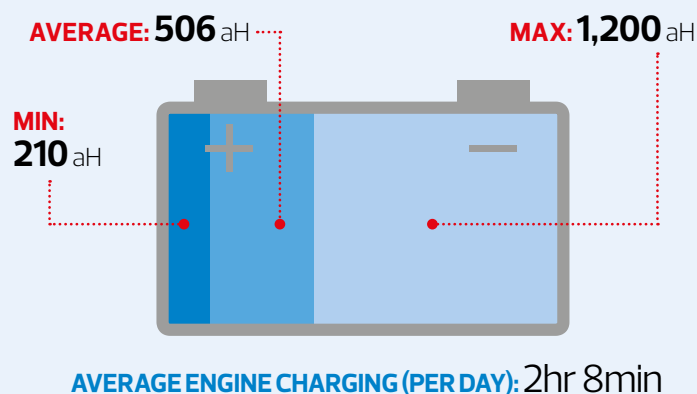
FUEL CARRIED

ENGINE HOURS
ENTIRE CROSSING

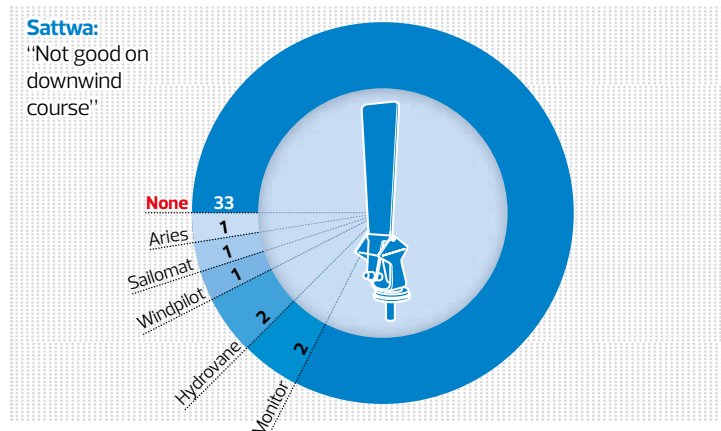
FUEL USED



BATTERY CAPACITY



WIND VANE STEERING

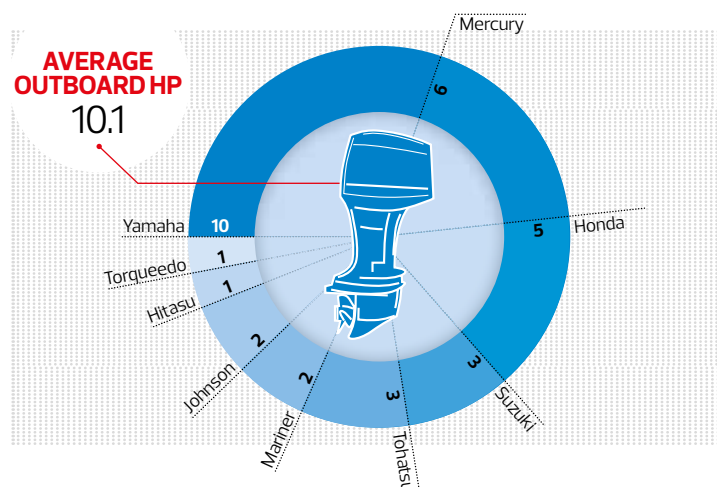


Often considered a bluewater staple, the windvane was also poorly represented on the Atlantic Odyssey, on only seven boats. Again, this is perhaps an indicator of how boats are becoming larger – 45ft is generally reckoned to be the largest boat size compatible with a windvane unless the boat has exceptional balance. **Hydrovane** and **Monitor** were

the two favourite brands, with only one **Aries**, **Windpilot** and **Sailomat** unit in the fleet.

As is often the case, skippers struggled to get the units to work well downwind, and their comments reflect this. *Penny Lane* said their Aries "could not be persuaded to steer well downwind" and *Sattwa* said the same of their Hydrovane.

TENDER & OUTBOARD



Many cruisers consider it necessary to upgrade to a RIB and a larger engine to tackle the coral beaches of the Caribbean. While I would argue this is not a necessity, plenty of this year's Odyssey boats carried hefty tenders and powerful outboards for speed and comfort.

Across many brands, the average tender length was 10ft

2in (3.1m), while the average outboard was a meaty 9.9hp. However, engines varied from an entry level 2.2hp up to a whopping 30hp – surely close to the limit for a tender on a family cruising boat?

Yamaha was the most popular outboard brand, accounting for 30 per cent of responses, followed by **Mercury** on 18 per cent and **Honda** on 15 per cent.

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Rig and sails

We found that boats were divided on whether they carried a downwind sail or not.

A surprisingly large proportion of yachts – nearly a quarter – carried no specific downwind sail at all.

“We decided not to buy a downwind sail,” said *Tumi*, a Jeanneau Sun Odyssey 469, “as we hardly used the gennaker we had for our old boat (maybe three times in 15,000 miles) and we preferred to pole out. We still prefer to pole out but will buy a downwind sail as a fall-back for future downwind passages.”

Gavroche, a Kesteloo BV 42, carried a gennaker, which

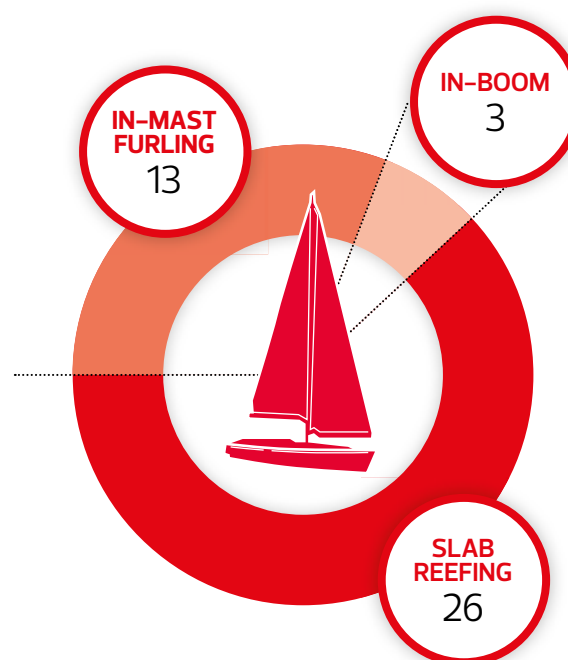
they used for 50 hours, but found their favourite set-up was a winged-out genoa, which they used for 275 hours.

Por Dos, a Catana 48, chose “a couple of nice days with the spinnaker” as the highlight of their crossing.

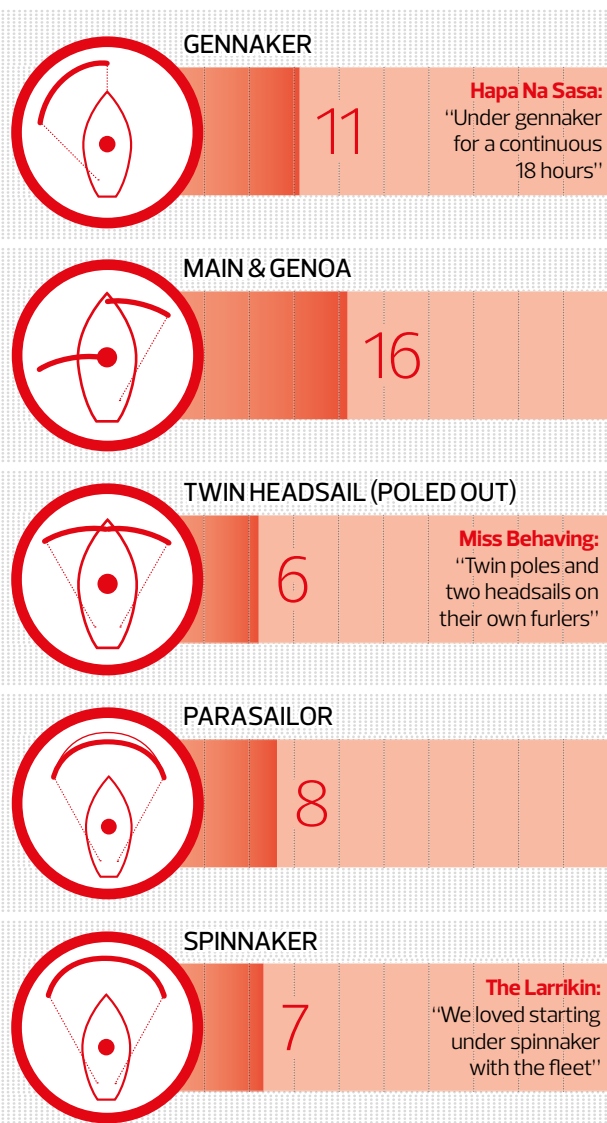
The Larrikin said of their Helia 44 catamaran: “We were impressed with the amazing stability under load during reaching and downwind and during storm-generated winds and gusts.” They used a Parasailor for going downwind.

A small number of boats had in-boom furling, although traditional slab-reefing mains were by far the most popular.

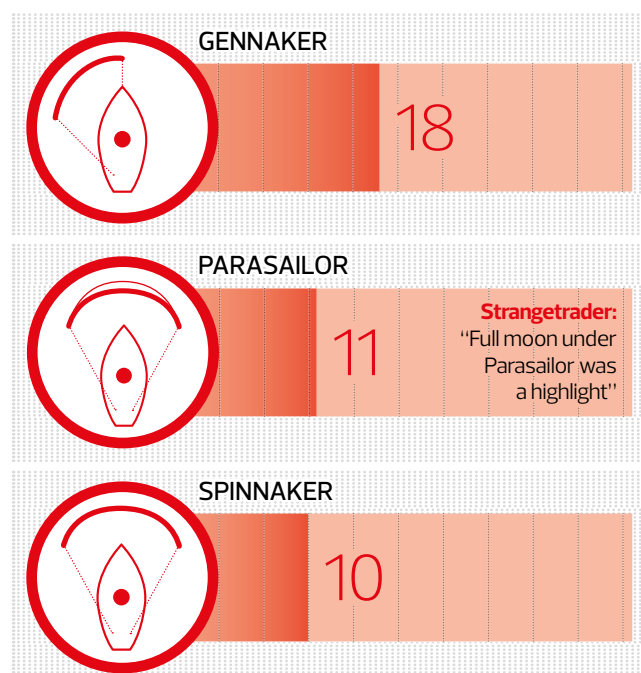
Mainsail system



Downwind sails used



Downwind sails carried



The crossing

The first week out proved unpleasant for many boats but once they got into the trades (and into their groove) and found flatter seas, morale picked up.

Hapa Na Sasa said: “finding” the trade winds for the first time was a particular highlight, as was catching their first fish – a 90cm mahi-mahi (they went on to catch six more mahi-mahi and a bonito).

Om, a Lagoon 40, said that “starting on a precise date made the first week hard”, which is one drawback of a rally. But once they arrived in Martinique they did say there’d been “no worries”.

Sephina, a Lagoon 400, said that there were “a lot more squalls than expected, especially at night”.

The most popular watch systems were three or four-hour shifts and some boats rotated, so everyone got to see a sunrise.

Most boats commented on the fish they caught, making sure to mention its length (a 2m wahoo) or weight (a 6kg dorado and a 5kg tuna).

Other nature spotted, but not eaten, included pilot whales, dolphins, storm petrels, tropical birds and flying fish.

When it came to the items crew wished they’d taken with them, there was one surprising contender – frozen

(and canned) fruit. This ‘wishful thinking’ category was mainly about the food – more vegetables, beer, a breadmaker, better fishing equipment.

In contrast, *Gavroche* said they wished they’d had a new, bigger spinnaker and graphite spray was on *Alytes*’s wishlist. *Vida* wanted for a satellite phone and internet connection.

The tools and spares used most often were basics like wrenches, screwdrivers and vice-grips, AA batteries, extra line, autopilot spares, oil and fuel filters. *Por Dos* said: “We carry a lot – needed little on the crossing.”

Asked to choose the ‘best bits’ of the crossing, many boats picked the fish and wildlife. “Every dolphin is a highlight,” said *Florentine*.

Life on board was also popular: “team spirit” from *Song of the Sea* and “breakdowns mastered; working improvisations”, said *Alytes*.

And let’s not forget the sailing itself. “Peaceful riding in moonshine” [*Kristine*] and “full-moon sailing” [*Nyctea*] were other peaks.

Roxy proclaimed they “loved it” and *Sattwa*, asked to give their highlight, simply said “the sailing” – which is, after all, why we do it.

MAXIMUM
WIND SPEED

68 knots



AVERAGE
MAXIMUM
WIND SPEED

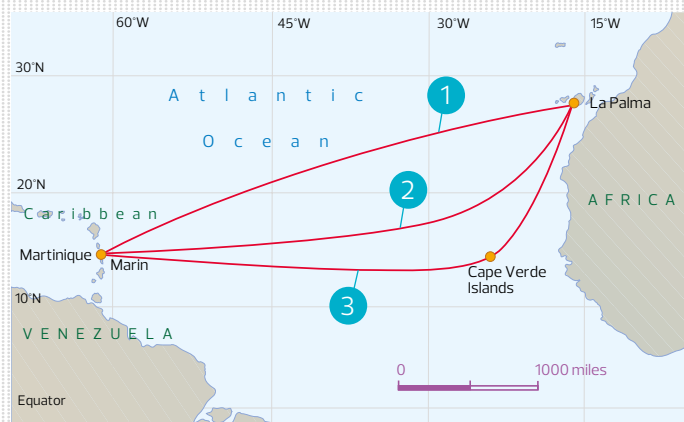
40 knots

AVERAGE
DAYS OF CALM
(<3 KNOTS TWS)

2.1

ROUTE TAKEN

1	2	3
RHUMB LINE	INTERMEDIATE	CAPE VERDE
7	20	11



Sattwa:

“The crossing was good but the first week out was unpleasant”

AVERAGE TIME
PLANNED FOR
THE CARIBBEAN

5.3 months

► Read Part II in next month's issue



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6.10m	9.50m ²	£319
6.40m	10.00m ²	£349
6.71m	11.40m ²	£379
7.01m	12.10m ²	£399
7.31m	13.60m ²	£449
7.62m	14.20m ²	£469
7.92m	14.90m ²	£489
8.23m	16.00m ²	£529

Luff	Area	Price
8.53m	17.3m ²	£559
8.84m	19.1m ²	£629
9.14m	19.9m ²	£659
9.45m	20.1m ²	£699
9.75m	22.1m ²	£759
10.06m	24.2m ²	£799
10.36m	25.0m ²	£819
10.67m	27.2m ²	£869
10.97m	28.7m ²	£919
11.28m	29.0m ²	£959

Cruising chutes

Luff	Area	Price
6.40m	17.75m ²	£279
7.01m	20.90m ²	£309
7.31m	21.80m ²	£339
7.93m	25.36m ²	£379
8.53m	29.10m ²	£429
9.14m	33.20m ²	£479
9.75m	37.50m ²	£539
10.36m	42.00m ²	£599

Luff	Area	Price
10.97m	46.80m ²	£669
11.58m	51.90m ²	£749
12.19m	57.20m ²	£829
12.80m	62.80m ²	£899
13.40m	68.70m ²	£979
14.33m	76.40m ²	£1,099
15.24m	87.80m ²	£1,249
16.15m	96.50m ²	£1,349

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Breakwater lights

The western tip has a lighthouse (Fl WR 10s19m12/9M and Iso 4s12m10M). On the eastern point is a beacon on a conical base (Fl WR 10s9m8/6M).

The Bridge

Short-cut avoiding a long anti-clockwise loop around Drake's Island. Stay between the lit posts. Minimum charted depth is 1.7m

Drake's Island

Surrounded by rocks, so keep two cables off and in the marked channels. Anchorage to the north

ROYAL WILLIAM
YARD HARBOUR

MARINA OFFICE



Emma Bamford reports from Plymouth, rich in seafaring history,
and from Mayflower – one of the city's seven marinas

PLYMOUTH

MAYFLOWER MARINA

GULL'S EYE

50° 21'.78N, 004° 10'.03W

Marina entrance

Access to southern pontoons is past
the floating concrete breakwater.
Even numbers are port side-to

Mayflower Marina

The apartment block that
looks like a cruise ship is a
clear point of reference





Whether or not you believe that Sir Francis Drake declared that there was plenty of time to finish his game of bowls on Plymouth Hoe before heading out to defeat the Spanish Armada, there's no doubting that Plymouth is steeped in sailing history.

From the Georgian Royal William victualling yard to today's Royal Navy presence (we saw Marines practising landing on the beach below Mount Edgcumbe during our visit), to America's Cup races, the Fastnet finish line and multiple boat-related businesses, the city has long played a central role in the nation's maritime life.

Sir Francis has given his name to many things in the city, including Drake's Island, in Plymouth Sound, and a shopping centre.

In that vein, the impressive Georgian Royal William Yard complex now houses a host of restaurants including Bistrot Pierre and Wagamama. A boutique hotel and spa linked to

Cornwall's Watergate Bay Hotel is due to open later this year.

The Pilgrim Fathers set sail for the New World on the *Mayflower* in 1620 and a special flagstone marks the Mayflower Steps departure point in the Barbican, which is the western and northern sides of the old harbour area of Plymouth.

You can visit Smeaton's Tower, which was the third Eddystone lighthouse that was in service from 1759 to 1877. It now stands on Plymouth Hoe, above the cliffs, as a memorial to its designer, the civil engineer John Smeaton.



There are seven marinas in the city – Mayflower is in the west of the Sound. The furthest inland is Torpoint Yacht Harbour, in the River Tamar, which divides Devon to the east from Cornwall to the west.

Any of the seven can form the base for an excursion into the city, for an easy daysail to the pretty River Yealm or even act as a staging post for the Channel Islands or the Isles of Scilly.

Interestingly, the phrase 'up the creek without a paddle' reportedly comes from the area, referring to sailors from the Crimean War who were too badly injured to help paddle the tender.

Local berth holder

Tony Pinney



39ft (11.9m) ferro-hulled *Rockbottom* of Wessex here.

I've had a boat at Mayflower since 1980 and I keep my home-built

I originally chose this marina because I lived and worked in Yeovil and it was the quickest one in the area to get to. Then in 1983 I became a shareholder.

I've done about 22,000 miles in *Rockbottom*, mainly to the Solent and France

— I've been to southern Brittany 14 times. It's only 90 miles scross from here.

I originally built *Rockbottom* as a ketch but I took out the mizzen in 1987. She always gets lots of attention — even the French take photographs of her.



MAYFLOWER MARINA 50° 21'.78N, 004° 10'.03W

Marina guide...

The award-winning Mayflower Marina is largely berthholder-controlled

Voted UK Coastal Marina of the Year for 2015 and 2014, Mayflower is an independent marina owned largely by its own berthholders. In fact, 18 per cent of the marina's customers actually own the company, Sailport plc, that runs it. In return for buying shares they receive an allowance against their mooring fees and other services.

Managing director Charles Bush said that being independent, rather than part of a chain, gave him

freedom in making decisions: "I really value our autonomy. Hopefully that transfers into a slightly different approach to things like customer service."

The marina has 396 berths, including 40 for visitors, can accommodate boats up to 72ft (22m) and is accessible at all states of tide. There's a 5.5m (18ft) tidal range here.

Also on site are a variety of yacht services, as well as Jolly Jack's bar restaurant and a new chandlery, which opened this spring.

Mayflower Marina is one of the founding members of Transeurope marinas, whose 69 select marinas across Europe offer a discount to reciprocal members.

Charles has also arranged for free dinghy parking just across the harbour at Royal William Yard, which visitors may also take advantage of.

FACTFILE MAYFLOWER MARINA

Contact: 01752 556633
info@mayflowermarina.co.uk
mayflowermarina.co.uk

Marina VHF: 80

Tides: Devonport (Plymouth)

Facilities:

Manned: 24/7

Fresh water: all berths

Electricity: all berths

Fuel: petrol and diesel

Gas: Calor/Camping Gaz

Free Wi-Fi

Toilets and showers/bath

Laundrette

Parking: on site and off site

Various yacht services on site

(see page 56 for contacts)

Boat hoist: 33 tons

Jolly Jack's bar/restaurant:

01752 500008 jollyjacks.co.uk

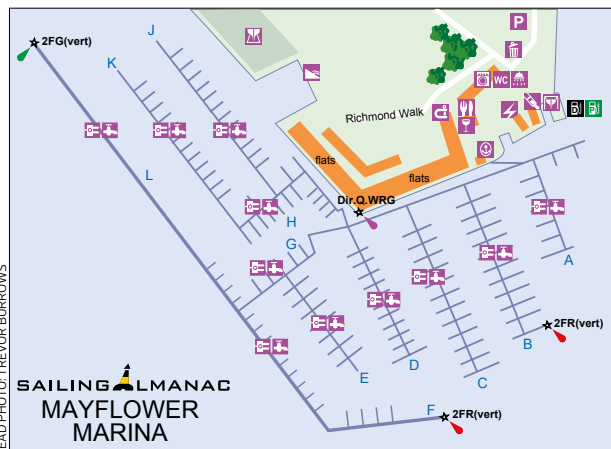
Captain Watts (chandlery)

01752 927067

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LEAD PHOTO: TREVOR BURROWS



Case study

Westerly Oceanranger 38

Boat name	Maalesh
Location	Inverclyde
Treatment	Coppercoat® anti-foul applied 1996
Photo	October 2013 with owner

Verdict The original treatment lasted 17 years. In 2014, Maalesh was treated with Coppercoat® anti-foul for the second time.



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www.clyde-outboard-services.co.uk

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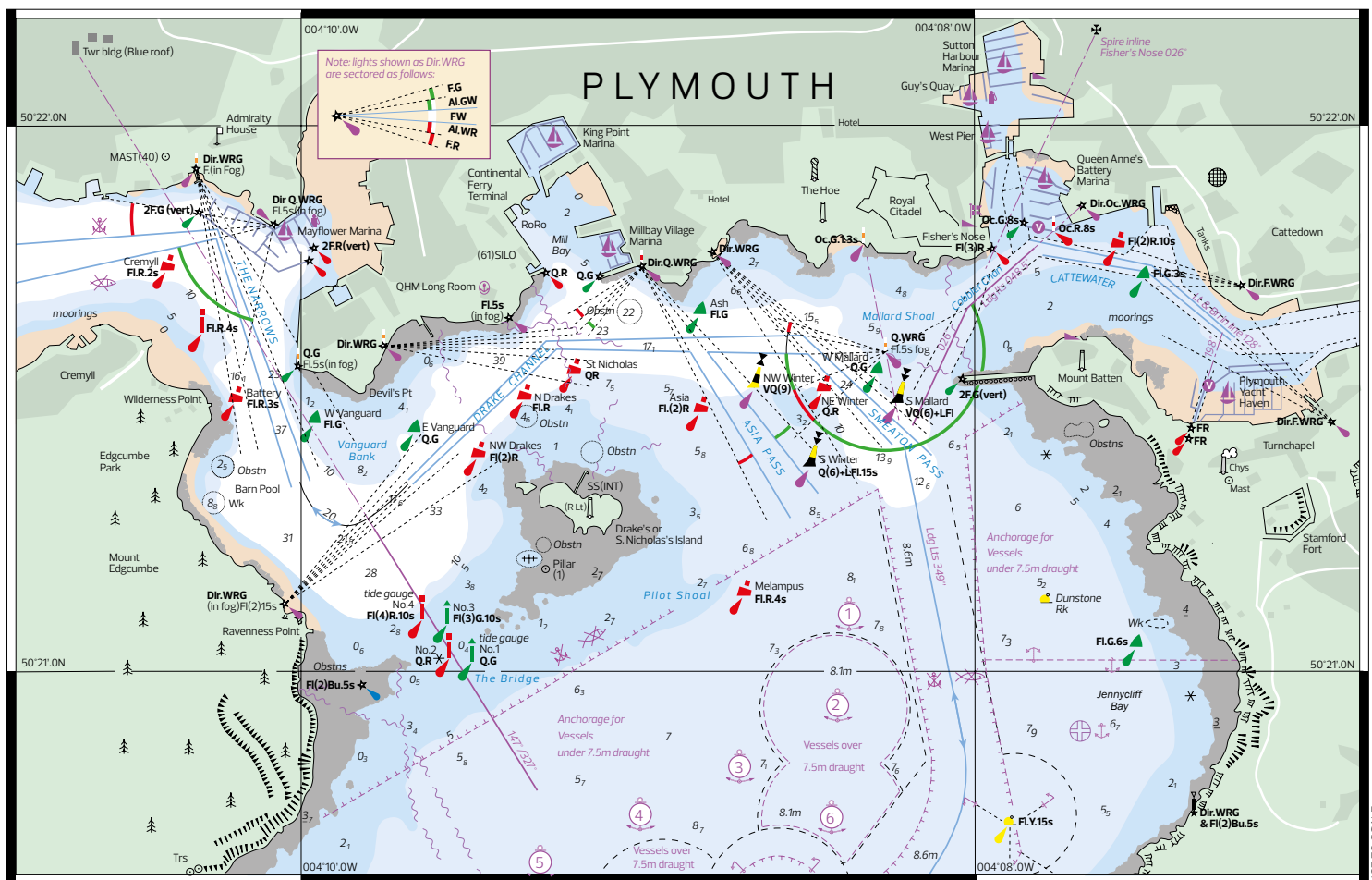
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www.mes-marine.co.uk

Bridger Marine
Exeter
T: 01392 216420
www.johnbridgermarine.co.uk

South West Yacht Brokers
Plymouth
T: 01752 401421
www.southwestyachts.co.uk



www.tohatsu.co.uk



Passage planning...

A dramatic city panorama to the north – and look out for submarines

As you enter Plymouth Sound by either the east or west passage past the breakwater, you will see the city as a mile-and-a-half panorama directly to your north. There are sector lights to guide you at night.

There are marinas on the east side and Mayflower Marina is located to the west of Plymouth Sound.

Your approach can be made either via The Bridge (which, confusingly, is not a bridge at all but a gate formed by four posts marking safe passage through underwater debris) or by following the Drake Channel. The shorter route is through The Bridge, which, although well lit, is fairly narrow and should be considered only in favourable conditions. At present, one red port post is missing and has been replaced with a yellow special mark. It is advisable to motor through The Bridge due to strong

tidal flows. To the east and west of The Bridge there are underwater obstructions. Minimum shown depth in The Bridge is 1.7m but it may be deeper than charted.

Follow the navigation channel through the narrows, around Devil's Point. Mayflower Marina will appear on your starboard side at the

intersection with Stonehouse Creek. In daylight the distinctive residential development of apartments with white verandas, that looks a bit like the balconies of a cruise ship, provides an instant landmark.

The marina is protected by a heavy displacement concrete floating breakwater and the entrance to the pontoons is either via the southern end for pontoons A,B,C,D,E and F or via the northern end for pontoons G, H, J, K and L. They are all numbered such that even numbers are port side-to.

Plymouth is a Naval port under the control of the Queen's Harbour Master. Vessels of less than 20m (65ft) must avoid impeding vessels constrained to the main channel.

The marina maintains a listening watch on VHF channel 80 at all times (call sign Mayflower Marina). Shipping movements are controlled by QHM on channels 13 and 14 under the call sign 'Longroom'.

Keep at least 50m (164ft) from berthed warships, 100m (328ft) from berthed submarines and at least 200m (656ft) from submarines under way.

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OTHER MARINAS

Plymouth Yacht Haven 01752 404231 yachthavens.com

Sutton Harbour Marina 01752 204702
suttonharbourmarina.com

Queen Anne's Battery 01752 671142
queenannesbattery.co.uk

YACHT SERVICES

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westcountryyachts.com

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Ullman Sails (sails and covers) 01752 337131 ullmansails.co.uk

Network Yacht Brokers 01752 605377
networkyachtbrokers.co.uk

ATTRACTIONS

Mount Edgcumbe House and Country Park
01752 822236 mountedgcumbe.gov.uk

National Marine Aquarium 0844 893 7938
national-aquarium.co.uk

Mayflower Museum 01752 306330 plymouth.gov.uk

Smeaton's Tower 01752 304774 plymouth.gov.uk

MAIN PIC: BAO XIU

Cruising grounds... Reasons to visit

There are pretty anchorages in Plymouth Sound itself, especially Barn Pool to the west of Drake's Island, under Mount Edgcumbe, which is an 865-acre country garden and house that is open to the public. Approach Barn Pool using either the wide channel to the north of Drake's Island or the Bridge channel to the southwest.

The Hamoaze is an estuary channel on the western side of Plymouth Sound, lined by dockyards and Naval moorings. A little way up it divides,

with the Lynher or St Germans River, being navigable for four miles to the west, and the River Tamar going 12 miles to the north. Go up the Lynher and you'll find the isolated anchorage of Dandy Hole, a pool with a depth of at least 3m (10ft).

The Tamar, a designated area of outstanding natural beauty, is recommended on a flood tide and there are moorings at Saltash, just before the road and rail bridges – factor in the 30m (100ft) clearance – and further up at Cargreen.

An easy day's sail from Mayflower is the River Yealm, five miles east. Anchor in the entrance, take a mooring or go alongside a pontoon in the middle of the river. By dinghy you can pass up the creek with its wood-lined banks and visit the pubs of Newton Ferrers.

Salcombe is 19 miles to the east and Fowey is 22 miles away, so both are options for a weekend cruise from Plymouth.

Salcombe is also a good stopping-off point if you're going to the Channel Islands: it's 70 miles from there to St Peter Port in Guernsey.

Charles Bush at Mayflower Marina recommends a cruise from Plymouth to Fowey to Falmouth to the Helford river and back to Plymouth, a total distance of about 70 miles.

If you're in Plymouth *en route* to the Isles of Scilly, Penzance wet dock, on the way, offers a port of refuge.

Below left
Red and white stripes on Smeaton's Tower on Plymouth Hoe

Below
The Mayflower Steps on the Barbican



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Nautiraids make a huge range of folding kayaks - see website for more info. Featured here are the popular *Naraks*, derived from the craft of the Inuit; with centuries of development to their hull forms, they offer a near-perfect combination of stability and speed.

Grand Narak 550 (above left). A two-person model that can also be set up as a spacious single, price from £3150

Narak 550 (below). Nautiraids' fastest, longest and narrowest single sea kayak, yet still stable enough for those with a little experience. Price from **£2700**

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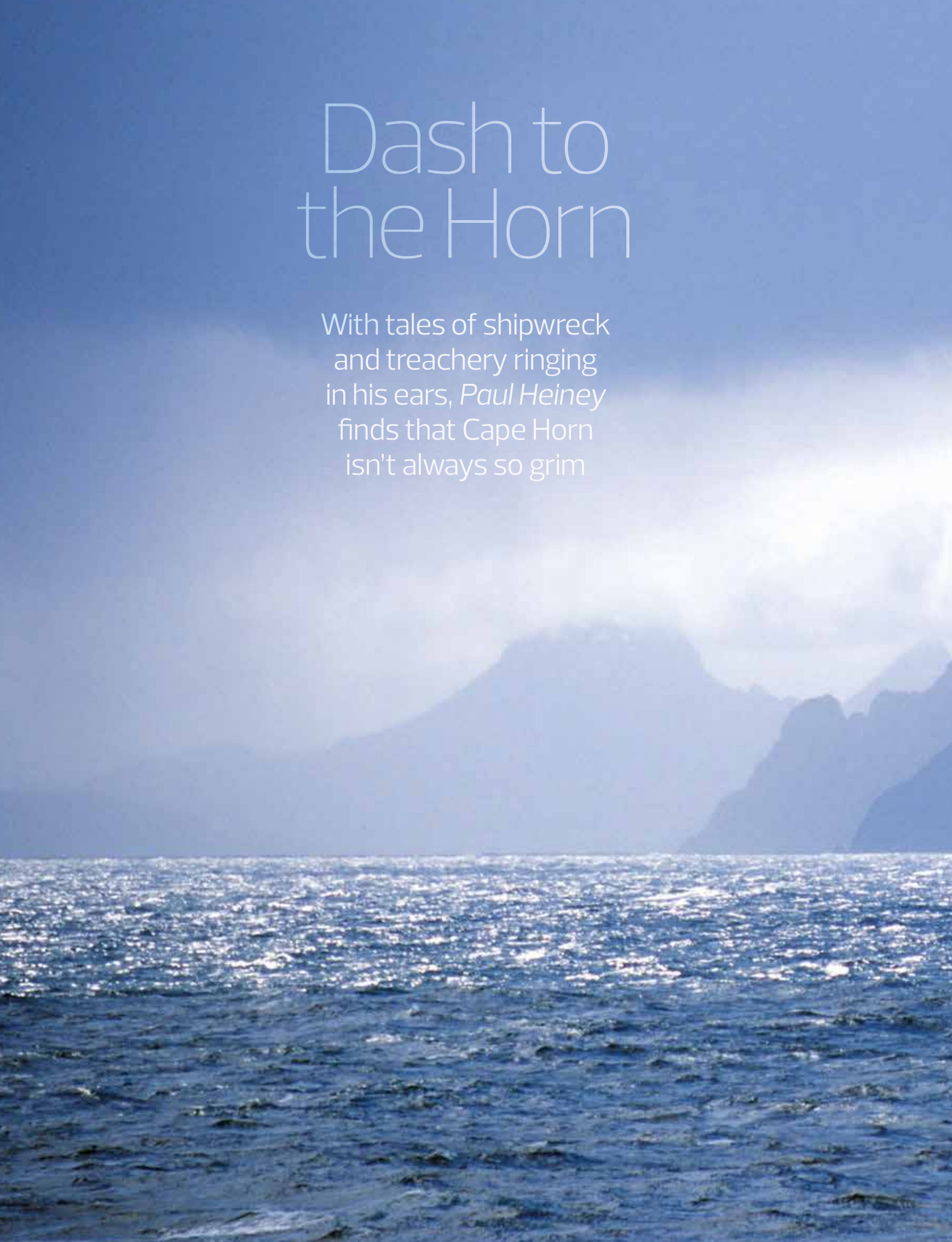



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Dash to the Horn

With tales of shipwreck
and treachery ringing
in his ears, *Paul Heiney*
finds that Cape Horn
isn't always so grim





Every sailor is rightly fearful of Cape Horn, and I am no exception. Of all the headlands in the world, none speaks more of dread and danger than this southern tip of the American continent.

It sits in that belt of uninterrupted wind ominously called the Furious Fifties where deep depressions barrel round the globe without ever touching land, becoming ever more

volatile, and the resulting seas can be immense. But the swells are made even worse at the Horn, for here the ocean narrows to a mere 600 miles as the finger of the Antarctic peninsula restricts their path and the water shallows – a perfect recipe for tumult and tempest. The Andes don't help either; strong winds are deflected south, which only adds to the confusion. Weather changes quickly here: calm one minute, ferocious the next. It really is a hell of a place.



For all these reasons, you can see why I might have been nervous about a passage around Cape Horn. I already had 9,000 miles under my belt having sailed from Falmouth, England, to deepest Patagonia. I had already cruised the Beagle Channel and anchored at the foot of its glaciers and seen some of the most inspiring anchorages on earth. Now all that remained before the long flog home was to sail round Cape Horn, and to say that I had done it.

The best place to begin a Cape Horn adventure is in the bar of the *Micalvi*, an old, grey, but venerable munitions ship which was sunk by the Chilean navy in the only

bombproof anchorage for miles around – Puerto Williams. Yachts tie alongside, safe and secure from anything the weather can throw at them, and every night their crews creep into the bar where a log fire roars year-round and Pisco Sours (the Chilean national drink and very seductive) flow, as does the chatter of salty tales. It is rightly proud to call itself the southernmost yacht club in the world and it was here that we found ourselves one February night, wondering if we might ever make it round that tantalising headland, now less than 50 miles to the south of us.

If you have got as far as the *Micalvi*, then, in truth, it is not

much more than a day sail down to the Horn. By the time you have weaved through the islands (the Horn itself is the southernmost tip of an archipelago and not the south American landmass some people think) it makes for a sail of 70 miles, so not much more than a hop across the English Channel. Needless to say, it can end up being rather more testing than that.

The fast-changing weather is the problem. All skippers read the GRIB files as fast as they are delivered, all looking for a break in the weather that will allow them round the Horn. But the charter skippers, the ones who are doing this for a living, know that the weather here can outrun the most powerful computer and a forecast of a workable 30 knots can turn into a 50 knot reality on

Left
Anchoring in the Chilean Channels requires a belt-and-braces approach

Top
Alongside in Puerto Williams, where it can snow on any day of the year

Above
The author at the helm with Cape Horn astern

Micalvi Yacht Club

Built as a Baltic trader called the *Ostenwerft* in Germany in 1925, the *Micalvi* was sold to the Chilean Navy in 1928 and sailed from Europe with a cargo of munitions.

In 1931, the Chilean Navy mutinied, and *Micalvi* briefly fell into the hands of the insurrection. Her next contribution to history was to position the lighthouse on Snipe island in the Beagle Channel

in 1958. This provoked shelling from the Argentinean navy, which also installed an infantry company on the uninhabited island.

She was finally decommissioned in 1961 and grounded in Puerto Williams harbour (right). Classified as a historical monument, she has, since 2007, served as the clubhouse for the Micalvi Yacht Club. Her lower decks flood at high water.



ALL PHOTOS: PAUL HEINNEY



a regular basis. Escape plans can be the key to survival down here.

I was pondering all these things as we sat in the *Micalvi* that night. There was a general acceptance among most of the boats that there was no chance of getting round, not within the next week anyway. So we drank to that, and wondered how long we could linger before time started to run out and we had to head home.

I kept peering out of one of the

Above

Shards of rock among the Hornos Islands

Below

Nosing into another glacier-bound bay



large brass scuttles through which I could get a view of the Beagle Channel. It looked as fine as I had ever seen it. The wind was light, contrary to the forecast, and the sun was setting on distant snow-capped mountains. But, more importantly, the wind was in the northeast. This had never been mentioned in any of the many forecasts which were circulating. I noted that, and we went to bed.

Charts and pilots

Chile, Andy O Grady, 2nd ed. RCC Pilotage Foundation
Patagonia and Tierra del Fuego, Mariolina Rolfo/Giorgio Ardrizzi
capehorn-pilot.com

CAPE HORN

55°58'48"S 067°17'21"W

Named after the quiet town of Horn in the Netherlands, Cape Horn marks the northern edge of the Drake Passage. It is the southern headland of Hornos island, part of Chile's Hermite islands.

The Chilean navy maintains a lighthouse on the island, as well

as a house and a chapel. But the headland itself is marked only by a small, 4m-high GRP tower, whose light has a range of just 13 miles.


In 1992 a memorial of an albatross was installed, to mark the many lives lost in trying to round the Horn.





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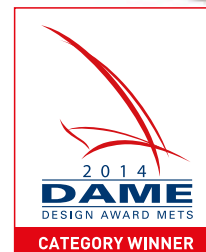
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Another view

Linda Crew-Gee sailed east round Cape Horn in December 2013 on the 25m *Tecla*, a Dutch herring fishing vessel converted into a sail training ship



"On the night of 20 November, a gale caught us with winds above 40 knots. A huge wave carried three

crew members from the stern to the bow and luckily did not throw them overboard. The next wave struck us with such force that it broke the metal bracket on the bulwarks that held the gangway and then with a great power struck it against the cabin.

"When we started bringing down the mainsail a rope got caught under the watertight metal doors and took them off the hinges. The loud noise of the wind, sails, and metal banging was even scarier from my cabin. Another big wave hit the ship with such an explosive force that my bunk was lifted from its solid frame and flew to the other side of the cabin. Luckily I stayed in it.

"Later we learned that these monster waves are known in Spain as *tres marías*. The first wave stops the ship in its tracks, the second rolls it over and the third buries it. We hoped not many would come our way.

"On 2 December we heard the call of 'Land ho!' – Diego Ramirez Island, 55nM southwest of Cape Horn. I spotted a tiny little pudding hump of an island, hardly visible. We were flying along at 12 knots in 40 knots of wind. The ship's motion was totally different: it was like being on a planing dinghy, surfing with shifting seas under us.

"In the Drake Passage, the surface of the sea was in shreds. The power of the wind flattened the waves, forming streaks of foaming water. Two days later, with 200nM to go to Port Stanley, we had to heave to in a massive easterly storm gusting over 60 knots. We paid out 80m of heavy four-strand mooring line as a sea anchor and set a mizzen to keep the boat into the wind, rolling heavily all the while."



It is a truly bleak spot where no vegetation grows, and nothing about it speaks of comfort

The next morning, defying all prediction, the wind was still light from the same direction. I told my crew we were leaving, and that I planned to head down to a small harbour on the eastern end of Navarino Island, Puerto Torro. This was a lie. In fact, it was never in my mind to stop there but I thought it best to avoid raising expectations at this stage. The wind remained light and in the east and I guessed the sea would be down and the infamous Southern Ocean swells diminished. Was this the moment to go for it?

Towards late afternoon I told the crew we were not stopping for the night – we were going round the Horn. Crewman Mike took to the galley to prepare stout grub to see us through, Malcolm braced

himself for the adventure ahead. In the fading light, full of excitement, we headed towards the misty and unlit islands, blue in the twilight. We were in no small way amused to find ourselves motoring to the Horn in what was now a calm.

The charts hereabouts are a bit rough and ready and don't always agree with the GPS, or even the land. So we proceeded with great caution, using the hand-bearing compass and the good old-fashioned ways of staying in deep water. The night was short and we were grateful for grey dawn as we started to weave our way past challenging rocks. One in particular had to be identified and avoided and there was much relief when the faint glimmer of its navigation mark was seen.

Just when it seemed that this trip was going to be under engine all the way, the wind started, inevitably, to head us and freshen from the west. This was not good news. I had my escape plan in my head and was ready to turn back at any moment, mindful of how fast conditions here deteriorate.

In the space of 15 minutes we were down to the third reef in the main, the yankee rolled away, and the staysail sheeted hard in. The seas were building on top of a growing Pacific swell, which we

Above
Wild Song reaches down towards Cape Horn

Below
The Chilean coast is scored with glaciers





were feeling for the first time, and progress became slow. We were now behind and to the north of the island on which Cape Horn stands. It is a truly bleak spot where no vegetation grows, and nothing about it speaks of comfort. The decks were awash, the spray freezing cold, and on either side of us were hungry-looking rocks, ready to devour us.

A moment would arrive when we could finally bear away and run for the Horn, and it seemed a lifetime coming. Eventually I called it, the wheel went over, the sheets were eased and we were flying south towards the black, granite headland.

Waves and swell reflected off it and gave us a lumpy ride but it was worth all the discomfort in the world. This was the ride of a sailing lifetime.

We nearly missed the Horn itself. It is not remarkable among its neighbours and the main lighthouse is some way to the east, the Horn itself carrying only a feeble light. But as we followed the coast and I saw the compass start to bear north of east I knew we were there. "Our skipper's got us round Cape Horn!" Malcolm declared.

It was not a moment for great celebration. Some have cracked the Champagne at this point but we were in more reflective mood. This is not a place to be ticked off

as a tourist experience, but rather a place to remember those who lost their lives in appalling conditions to get round this treacherous spot in craft far less seaworthy than ours. We were sailing through what has been a battlefield, and gave it due respect. I noted the wind at the time and it was blowing 25 knots: three hours later the lighthouse keeper was reporting 65kts. We had been lucky.

Not that we hesitated to celebrate when we were back at *Micalvi*. There was no small surprise among the other skippers when we told them that we had made it, and no small amount of satisfaction on our part. And now, when I tell the story of how I motored to Cape Horn in a flat calm, and have had far worse experiences getting round our own North Foreland, I don't think they believe me.

But it's the truth. Cape Horn is a treacherous place, but not all the time and not every day. ✦



'We were sailing through what has been a battlefield, and gave it due respect'

Above
Storm brewing above the Beagle Channel

Below
Alongside in Ushuaia



Wild Song

Victoria 38, 1998

LOA: 37ft 9in (11.5m)

LWL: 29ft 7in (9.0m)

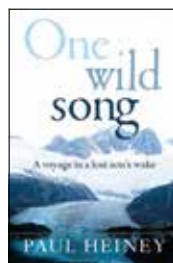
Beam: 11ft 7in (3.5m)

Draught: 5ft 8in (1.7m)

Engine: Volvo 38hp

Berths: 5

Designer: Chuck Paine



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VELOCITY MADE GOOD

ANDY LAUDER PONDERES THE AGE-OLD SAILING DILEMMA OF WHEN TO COVER MORE GROUND IN ORDER TO REACH YOUR DESTINATION SOONER



Changing course a little away from the direct line to your destination can give you more boat speed and can mean you arrive earlier. But how do you decide whether the extra distance you have to travel will be worth it? In this article we look at the detail around velocity made good (VMG) and how to play the numbers game to your advantage.

The question we need to be able to answer is: "If I turn away from the rhumb line by X degrees, how much faster do I need to sail in order to arrive at the same time?" This will give you the minimum speed you need to make on the new course to be 'winning'.

If you're off the wind, for example beam reaching, your VMG will probably be the same as your boat speed. It's when your destination is into the wind or dead downwind that VMG comes into play.

This table works out the boat speed needed to achieve a given VMG for a range of course offsets. Let's say you're making 6 knots towards your destination (sailing along the rhumb line). If you alter course by 30°, what boat speed is needed to maintain 6 knots VMG? Looking at the table, it is 6.9 knots. So, if altering your course gives you a boat speed of more than 6.9 knots, you'll get to your destination earlier.

From the table you can see that if you offset your course by up to 15° from the rhumb line, you need

a speed increase of less than 4 per cent to maintain your velocity made good. A course change of 15° or 20° can make quite a difference in the way a boat sails, so small alterations are well worth trying. Once you get above 30° from the rhumb line,

the required boat speed starts to build up rapidly and it becomes less likely you'd gain any advantage.

Obviously the tide can have a big impact on your progress. To work round this, substitute your speed over the ground for boat speed in the table, and use your course over the ground, rather than your heading, to calculate your course offset.

TERMINOLOGY

- **Rhumb line** – the straight line from starting point to destination
- **VMG** – the progress that you're actually making in a straight line towards your destination.
- **Course offset** – the angle between your course and the rhumb line, which is the amount you have decided to sail away from the most direct course to gain some extra boat speed.

1 The course offset angle is relative to the rhumb line from our start point to our destination. If the goal lies to windward then you're already sailing with a course offset when close hauled. In this case, any change of course away from the wind must be added to the existing course offset, not to zero, so the extra speed needed to maintain the VMG will be higher.

		VELOCITY MADE GOOD												
Offset	Extra speed	2	2.5	3	3.5	4	4.5	5	5.5	6	6.5	7	7.5	8
5°	0.4%	2	2.5	3	3.5	4	4.5	5	5.5	6	6.5	7	7.5	8
10°	1.5%	2	2.5	3	3.6	4.1	4.6	5.1	5.6	6.1	6.6	7.1	7.6	8.1
15°	3.5%	2.1	2.6	3.1	3.6	4.1	4.7	5.2	5.7	6.2	6.7	7.2	7.8	8.3
20°	6.4%	2.1	2.7	3.2	3.7	4.3	4.8	5.3	5.9	6.4	6.9	7.4	8	8.5
25°	10%	2.2	2.8	3.3	3.9	4.4	5	5.5	6.1	6.6	7.2	7.7	8.3	8.8
30°	16%	2.3	2.9	3.5	4	4.6	5.2	5.8	6.4	6.9	7.5	8.1	8.7	9.2
35°	22%	2.4	3.1	3.7	4.3	4.9	5.5	6.1	6.7	7.3	7.9	8.5	9.2	9.8
40°	31%	2.6	3.3	3.9	4.6	5.2	5.9	6.5	7.2	7.8	8.5	9.1	9.8	10.4
45°	41%	2.8	3.5	4.2	4.9	5.7	6.4	7.1	7.8	8.5	9.2	9.9	10.6	
50°	56%	3.1	3.9	4.7	5.4	6.2	7	7.8	8.6	9.3	10.1	10.9		
55°	74%	3.5	4.4	5.2	6.1	7	7.8	8.7	9.6	10.5				
60°	100%	4	5	6	7	8	9	10						
65°	137%	4.7	5.9	7.1	8.3	9.5	10.6							
70°	192%	5.8	7.3	8.8	10.2									
75°	286%	7.7	9.7											

BOAT SPEED



MORRIS ADANT, FACING PAGE: RICK TOMLINSON

Usually the best option is to make your tightest course to windward when close hauled, although sometimes freeing off a little can help.

VMG in practice

On your current course with the boat properly trimmed, work out your VMG (the GPS may tell you). If you're off the rhumb line, work out the course offset, round this to the nearest 5° and look along the corresponding row of the table to find the nearest value to your boat speed. Your current VMG is the value at the top of that column.

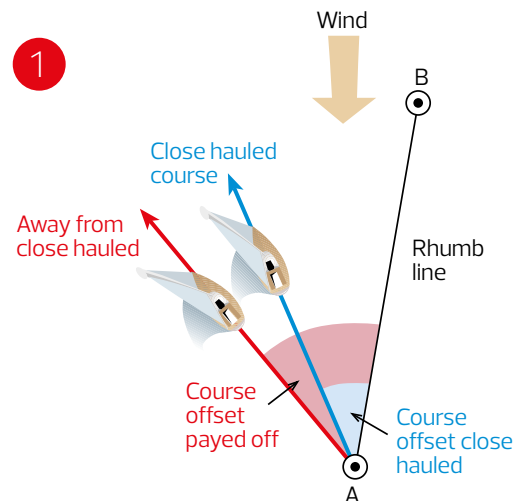
For example, let's say you're on a course that's 23° off the rhumb line

and your boat speed is 4.5 knots. Rounding up to the nearest 5° gives a course offset of 25°. Looking along this row, the closest entry to your boat speed is 4.4 knots; follow this column up and it tells you that your VMG is 4 knots.

Now change course to one that should give you better boat speed, trim the boat and let her settle, then work out your new VMG. Again, round the course offset to the nearest 5°, finding the nearest boat speed in this row and getting the VMG from the top of the column.

If your new VMG is better than your old one then it means you're winning. It's worth trying a

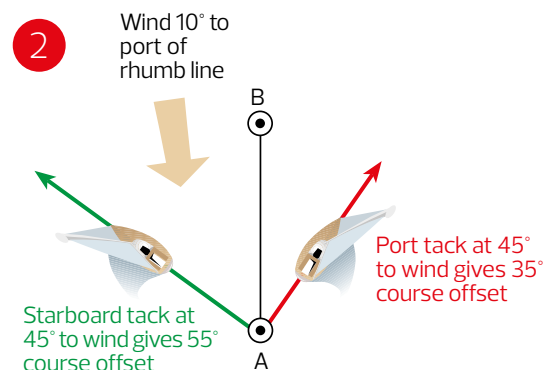
MAKING GOOD



Course offset

From start point to destination the course offset angle is relative to the 'rhumb line'. Usually the best option here is to make your tightest course to

windward when close hauled, although there are occasions, say in strong winds, where freeing off a little can help.



Best tack when beating

Choosing the tack that puts the wind onto the opposite side of the rhumb line to the boat will give you a smaller course offset and therefore higher VMG. Taking the tide on the lee bow ('lee bowing') can also help you be more efficient.

further course change to see if you can improve things further. Try small steps at a time, 5° or 10°.

If your new VMG is less than your old one then the course change has made things worse so you should go back to your original course.

The wind is never constant and tidal streams are going to alter both with time and your location, so from time to time it's worth experimenting with course changes to see what effect they have.

Which way to turn?

2 If there are no navigational hazards nearby, pick the direction that keeps you closest to the



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rhumb line. When beating, if the wind is just off the rhumb line it's best to choose the 'long' tack on the opposite side of the rhumb line. So, if the wind is to port of your destination, turn to starboard, because it keeps you closer to the rhumb line for the same wind angle (see illustration previous page).

If the wind is on the rhumb line, there's little wind advantage to one tack over the other. Instead, look to any cross tide. It's generally best to choose the tack or gybe that puts the tide on the lee bow, ie if the tide comes from port side, then go onto starboard tack/gybe so you're sailing partly into the tide and offsetting your leeway.

3 On a run, it's the other way around: turn towards the wind to get a better wind angle and thus better boat speed. So, if the wind is over the starboard quarter then turn to starboard.

When to tack or gybe

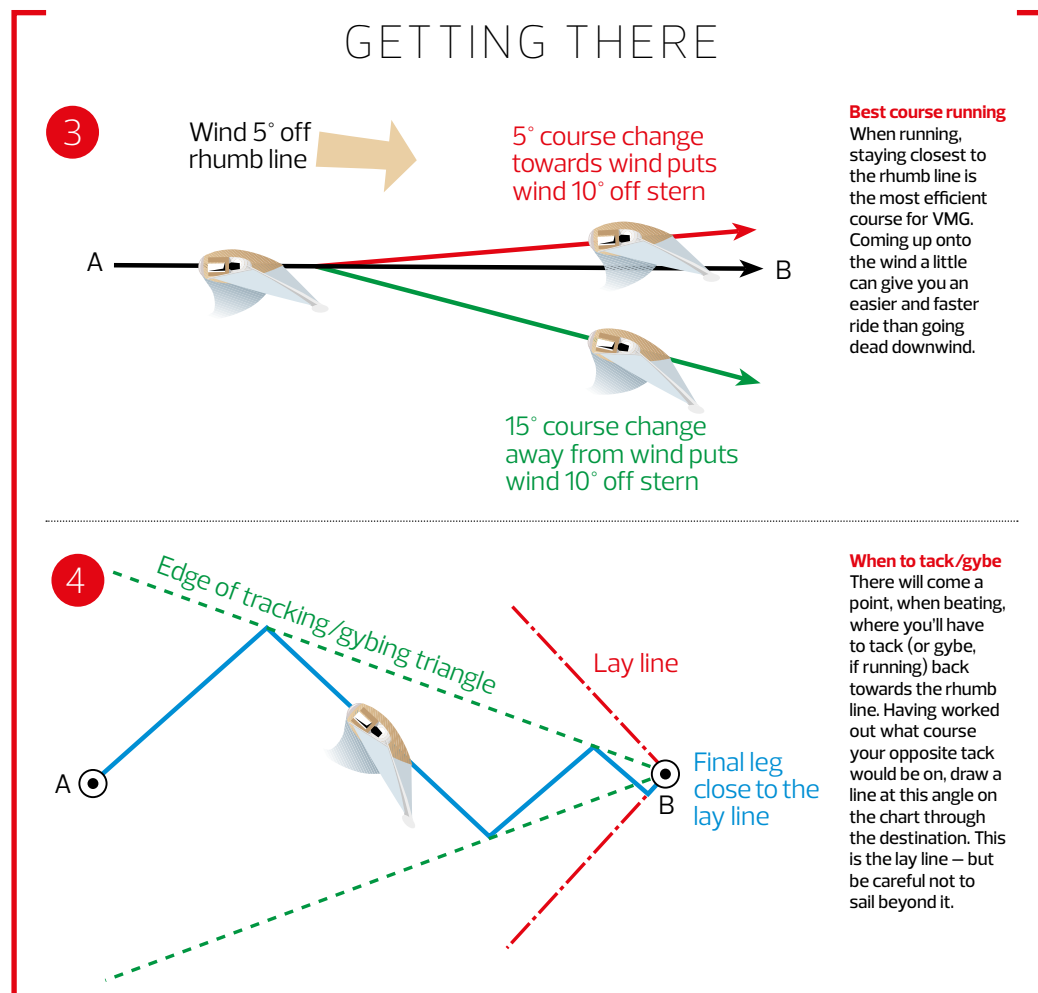
4 At some point you'll have to tack (if beating) or gybe (if running) back towards the rhumb line.

Let's assume that the boat will make the same speed with the same wind angle on either tack.

Having worked out what course your opposite tack would be on, draw a line at this angle on the chart through the destination. This is the lay line – the line to sail along to reach (lay) the destination in the optimum time. In reality, sailing off on a long leg, hitting the lay line then sailing back to the destination is not a wise thing to do, as it leaves you open to foul wind shifts.

You should be heading back to the rhumb line before you get to the lay line, unless you're nice and close to your destination, when you can get on to the lay line for the final tack/gybe.

In open water, a good technique is to draw a triangle on the chart with its point on the destination and each side a set angle from the rhumb line (something like 10° or 20° works well). The aim is to keep inside the triangle, so when you're some way off the destination make long legs between tacks



Motorsailing into a headwind and sea

If you have a boat speed and VMG of 3.4 knots but then bear away by 30° to get some extra drive from the sail, you could easily see a boat speed of 5.2 knots, which is a VMG of 4.5 knots, taking a third off the time to go. Just be careful not to let the boat heel by more than 15–20° or you could affect the engine.

or gybes and as you get closer, shorten the length of the legs.

As you get close, you'll find you're sailing along the lay line. Be careful not to sail beyond it.

To accurately work out your VMG on the new course after tacking or gybing, take the position of the tack/gybe as a new start point and draw a new rhumb line to the destination and optimise your VMG along this new rhumb line.

The benefits

These techniques will normally only give an advantage if the wind is blowing reasonably close to the

rhumb line. If you're lucky enough to have the wind on the beam then set the best course to your destination and enjoy the sail.

In the simplest terms, for courses of up to 15° or 20° away the rhumb line there's very little loss in VMG. If you can get decent improvement in boat speed from a small change in course like this then it's worthwhile.

Increasing average VMG from 5 knots to 5.5 knots can shave almost an hour and a half off the passage from Harwich to Oostende (roughly 80 miles). That's plenty of time for a shower and an extra bottle of Belgian beer – well worth a little extra effort in my book. ✦

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Andy Lauder caught the sail cruising bug when a friend invited him on a cross-Channel trip. He has worked as a Yachtmaster instructor but now sails for pleasure with his wife, Helen, on their Oyster 435 *Speedwell of Rhu*.

SUPER COMPUTER

THE MET OFFICE'S NEW 140-TONNE NUMBER-CRUNCHER COULD REVOLUTIONISE WEATHER FORECASTING, SAYS **FRANK SINGLETON**



The statistics are mindboggling. Over 23,000 trillion calculations per second at peak, 120,000 times as much storage as a range-topping smartphone and weighing in at 140 tonnes, the Met Office's new Cray XC40 will be about 13 or 14 times faster than the current IBM supercomputer. And at a cost of £97m, it doesn't come cheap.

Back in 1960, the first Met Office machine had a (then) staggering speed of some 10,000 calculations per second. It held one number in its memory; input data, output data and programs were stored on five-hole paper tape. Since that time, continually increasing computing power has resulted in forecasts improving beyond all expectation.

The new supercomputer will be split operationally and physically between the Met Office and the neighbouring Exeter Science Park. It is expected to come into operation in September this year but take a further two years to reach full capacity.

Experience over the past 60 years has shown that day-to-day operational weather forecasting improves when computer models are run with higher resolutions – smaller grid lengths and shorter time-steps. In round terms, every halving of the horizontal resolution needs a 16-fold increase in computer speed.

The current computer model gives output for the whole planet on a 17km grid. It is run to several days ahead twice a day. The global model handles large-scale weather such as highs, lows and fronts reasonably well. But increased computer power will enable shorter grid lengths of 10-12km and better, more accurate forecasts.

Improving accuracy

Naturally, there will never be certainty; chaos is a problem with all weather forecasts. Neither the forecasters nor their computers know exactly what is happening at the start of a forecast and those uncertainties have an impact on forecast accuracy. This is tackled using 'ensembles'. Starting with the same data, small

Above
Artist's impression of the new building that will house the Met Office supercomputer

Met Office app
Marine forecasts aren't yet available on the app, but you can access useful pressure charts. The main website has detailed marine forecasts under 'specialist forecasts'

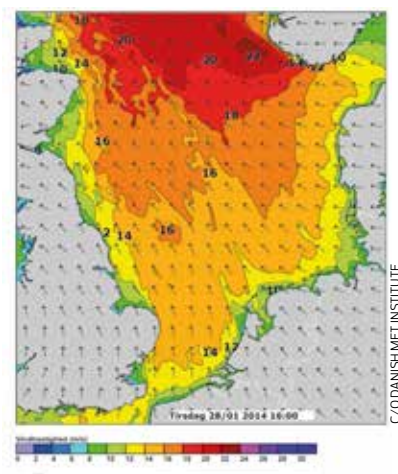


MAIN PHOTO: MET OFFICE

differences are introduced at the analysis stage. Many forecasts are then produced and their outcomes differ to a greater or lesser extent. Those differences can be used as a measure of predictability on individual occasions.

We see this in forecasts on radio and TV. Sometimes the forecaster is pretty sure about the weather for the week ahead, albeit with uncertainties about timing or intensity. At other times, they can be quite uncertain for the next two days. This will always be the case – chaos rules. However, significantly greater computer power will allow more forecasts in an ensemble. This will give more certainty in assessing when the forecasts can be relied upon and when not. More certainty about the uncertainty!

Predictions for the next few days are important to cruising sailors. They reduce the risk of being caught out unexpectedly. They minimise the chances of being on the wrong side of the English Channel, North Sea or Irish Sea at the end of a summer cruise.



Left
Danish forecasts are no more detailed than those from the Met Office but are better presented in app format

Shipping Forecasts have a 330-word limit and Inshore Forecasts have limited time allotted to them by the Coastguard. Worded forecasts covering large areas can only ever be brief summaries, essentially headlines. Consequently, real improvements will not be obvious for forecasts on Radio 4, LW, and marine VHF or in text over NAVTEX. Even if computers could give perfect forecasts, spoken forecasts could never describe all the detailed weather experienced at sea.

Nor is the Met Office weather app very useful to sailors at present. Focused on land-based activities, its displays can't match those from the Danish Met Institute, for example. But even the Danish presentation (above left) would not be able to show all the details in the weather, even if they were forecast accurately. To handle the data volumes for small-scale detail would need good, fast communications facilities whether on land or at sea. We would also need on-board computer software to process the data and time to absorb it.

Even more importantly, small weather details have short lifetimes. For example, a thunderstorm might be 20km across with a total lifetime of around six hours. By the time data is gathered and processed, and output made available using an online system; we would still have to absorb the results. The storm would have been and gone!

In the end, though, better data makes for better forecasts and, certainly for coastal sailors, that equals safer passage planning. ✂

For detail around the UK, a model nested within the global model is currently run six-hourly with a 1.4km grid. The new machine's increased power will be able to slash the resolution to about 300m. Masses of the most detailed data available are already used, including high-resolution imagery from radar and satellites. The Cray will be able to run these detailed forecasts on an hourly schedule, resulting in much better short-term warnings of severe, localised weather, such as the heavy rain of the Boscastle storm, locally strong, damaging winds and patchy, dense fog affecting airports and motorways.

Warnings 12 to 24 hours ahead can save life and minimise property damage. Warnings even three or four hours ahead can save lives. For the first time, this will provide invaluable, near-real-time guidance, saving the country hundreds of millions in damage.

Shipping Forecast

Despite these advances, sailors may not notice much improvement in formal shipping or inshore forecasts. There are good reasons for this.

	Current system – IBM Power 775	New system – Cray XC40
Weight	54 tonnes	140 tonnes
Number of cores (CPUs)	40,000	480,000
Memory for calculations	80,000 gigabytes (0.08 petabytes)	2 million gigabytes (2 petabytes)
Storage for data	2 million gigabytes	17 million gigabytes (17 petabytes)
Calculations at peak	1,200 trillion per second	23,000 trillion per second

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Icom VOX headset

Paired with the Icom IC-M73 handheld VHF radio, this headset allows the wearer to use the VHF hands-free. Mostly of interest in commercial applications, but could also appeal for, say, anchoring manoeuvres on larger boats.

- ▶ icomuk.co.uk
- ▶ £120

NEW GEAR

OUR PICKS OF THE BEST NEW KIT FOR CRUISING SAILORS



New Garmin software

Garmin's larger multifunction displays (over 8in) have had a software overhaul which gives them a suite of great new sailing features. These include lay lines, to guide on tacking and gybing, simultaneous heading and course lines and a new wind rose showing true and apparent wind. They are compatible with radar, Wi-Fi and Garmin's new gWind transducer, which is said to give

more stable wind readings with its horizontal axis and twin tail. New safety, steering and networking features are also available across Garmin's full plotter range. Best of all, the new features are free to existing Garmin owners. All in all, a very useful boost for sailors.

- ▶ garmin.com/en-GB
- ▶ From free



Barton high-load eye

Newly launched by the British marine hardware specialist is a small 9mm high-load eye, for lines up to 4mm with a safe working load of 550kg. The range already includes eyes from 6mm to 28mm. With its hard anodised aluminium for super low friction, this is a real alternative to a heavy, expensive block for cruising boats – in fact we've just fitted one to turn our jib traveller control lines up towards the cockpit on our Sadler 34. Also available with Dyneema stop.

- ▶ bartonmarine.com
- ▶ £9.95



Catalina 340Z watermaker

An upgraded version of the American manufacturer's existing 300 model, the 340-Z can produce 53lt/hr for power consumption of 20A – a 15 per cent improvement, the company claims. Has a high-low mode option and a remote display.

- ▶ spectrawatermakers.com
- ▶ £10,780



Gill bifocals

Combining bifocal lenses for easier reading with a floating frame, these Gill sunnies also have a water and oil-repellent surface to keep them clear.

- ▶ gillmarine.com
- ▶ £55

Hubi 10k solar charger

This is a self-contained mini solar power kit, based on a 20W solar panel hooked up to a 10Ah Lithium-ion battery pack. Full charge is reached after 7–10 hours in UK weather conditions, and power can be drawn off via a 12V socket, two USB sockets and a pair of 12V lighting sockets for pairing with Hubi's LED lamps. A range of accessories includes fans and laptop chargers, and the units can be connected together for more storage.

- ▶ solartechnology.co.uk
- ▶ £180



Rohan Envoy suit

Is this what sartorially-minded bluewater cruisers have been waiting for? A 50–50 wool and polyester blend keeps this dark blue jacket and trousers crease-free, while stain-repellent and silver-based antibacterial treatments keep you fresh. Pull out of the fo'c's'le locker for instant yacht-club chic. Priced separately at £235 for the suit, £115 for the trousers.

- ▶ rohan.co.uk
- ▶ £350

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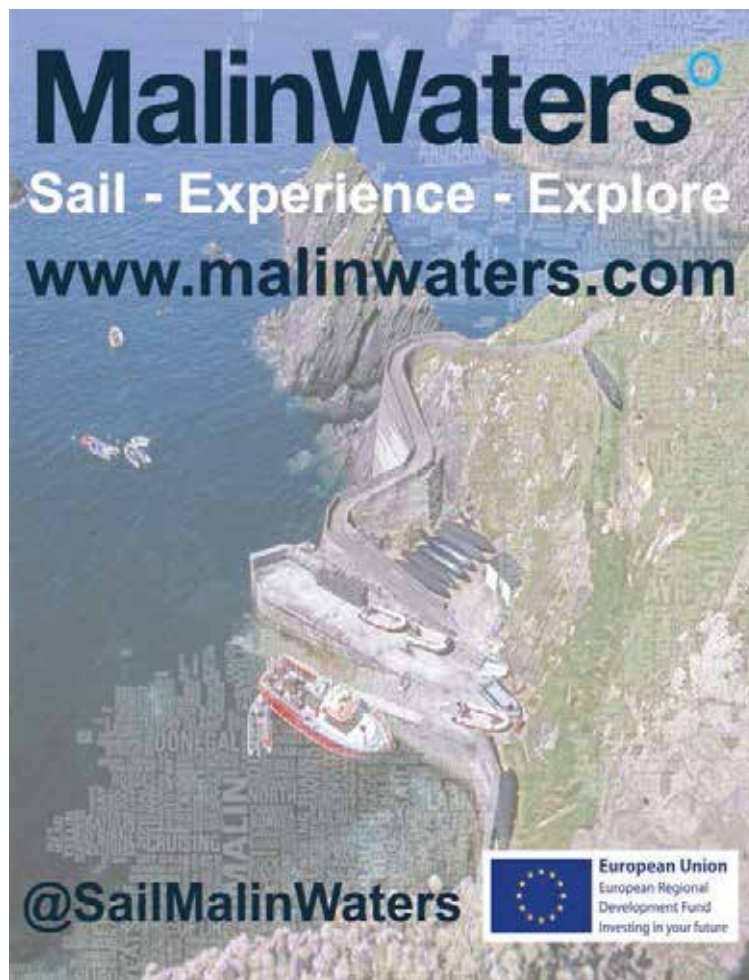
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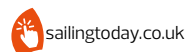
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SHORTLIST

WATERPROOF ACTION CAMS

MORE SHORTLISTS

We keep this list and others like it bang up-to-date online at:



GoPro Hero4 Black

Top-of-the-range option, featuring 120fps HD video, 4K video, adjustable field of view, Wi-Fi and audio recording.

- ▶ gopro.com
- ▶ £359



Garmin VIRB Elite

Capable of 1080p recording with 16Mp stills. High sensitivity GPS, barometer and accelerometer built in. Wi-Fi control, waterproof to 1m without extra case. Large battery.

- ▶ garmin.com
- ▶ £220



Ion Air Pro 3

Waterproof, so no additional housing needed. Large, clear button controls, but no screen. Wi-Fi, 1080p and up to 120fps.

- ▶ uk.ioncamera.com
- ▶ £300



Liquid Image Ego

Cheaper and more cheerful, the Ego can still manage 30fps at 1080p. 12 megapixel photos with continuous shoot mode. Wi-Fi controlled. Waterproofing requires extra housing (c£45).

- ▶ liquidimageco.com
- ▶ £120



Drift Ghost-S

Punchy performer: 60fps at HD, good in low light and with a low-power RF remote control. Has a 2in screen for playback and is waterproof to 3m with no housing.

- ▶ driftinnovation.com
- ▶ £330



Contour Roam 3

Resembling a bike light, the Roam 3 is waterproof to 10m. It does a respectable 1080p at 30fps and takes standard mounts. No Wi-Fi, though.

- ▶ contour.com
- ▶ £190



Polaroid XS100i

An HD camera with 170° field-of-view. Waterproof and features auto-rotating lens. Wi-Fi connection.

- ▶ polaroid.com
- ▶ £110



Sony X1000V

A very high-spec (and relatively bulky) camera. Up to 4K video, but does 120fps in HD mode. GPS, Wi-Fi, built-in audio. It's only waterproof with an extra case.

- ▶ sony.co.uk
- ▶ £359





And then we swam

Imagine – you've just crossed an ocean. You're tired and your food stores are running low. Your GPS tells you you've just got three miles left to go – and then a wave capsizes and destroys your boat. What do you do?

The film of Ben Stenning and James Adair's ordeal is called *And Then We Swam* – because that's what they did. In 2013 they became the first unsupported pair to row across the Indian Ocean, covering 3,500 miles from Australia in 116 days before they were wrecked east of Mauritius. They swam for shore, and made it alive (even though Stenning had accidentally shot Adair in the leg with a flare).

Their story, by filmmaker Ben Finning, is one of four short movies in the Ocean Film Tour coming to the UK on five dates in May.

The other three cover cave diving, surfing and windsurfing, and what all four have in common is that they get across the awesome power of the sea and how vulnerable man is when he takes it on – whether he's swimming through it or riding across it, in any form of vessel, including a sailing boat.

- ▶ Touring the UK from 15–22 May
- ▶ oceanfilmtour.com
- ▶ £14



Mobile yacht security

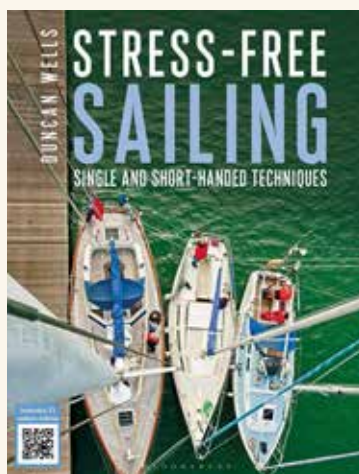
Manything is an app that turns your old iPhone, iPod or iPad into a CCTV system. An iOS device will start filming when it detects motion and uses Wi-Fi to ping video to the Cloud. You can view images through the iPhone you have on you or via the web and can even switch from forward to back-facing camera. Originally designed for homes, the company is now reaching out to boat owners.

Verdict: A nifty idea but as it needs power and Wi-Fi, better suited to a marina than a remote anchorage.

- ▶ From £2 for 48hrs to £5/month
- ▶ Download via the App Store

TIME OUT

OUR PICK OF THE BEST NEW BUNKSIDE READING, FILM AND SMARTPHONE APPS



Short-handed advice

Duncan Wells's explanation of why you should learn singlehanded sailing techniques is bang on the money, from the newly-qualified day skipper who finds herself having to instruct her novice family to the husband who sheepishly explains to his marina neighbours that his wife isn't coming sailing this weekend because "we had a bit of an incident last time and she has been rather put off".

Whether you have a full complement of regular crew or sail with just your partner, it can only help to

know single- and short-handed techniques and Wells covers everything from reefing to getting off berths and mooring buoys.

He has lots of little tricks and tips, too, like using the genoa track block to reeve your spring-line through if you don't have an amidships cleat.

Verdict: A nice extra touch is the QR codes throughout the book that link to videos demonstrating the points.

- ▶ Publisher: Adlard Coles Nautical
- ▶ Author: Duncan Wells
- ▶ £16.99

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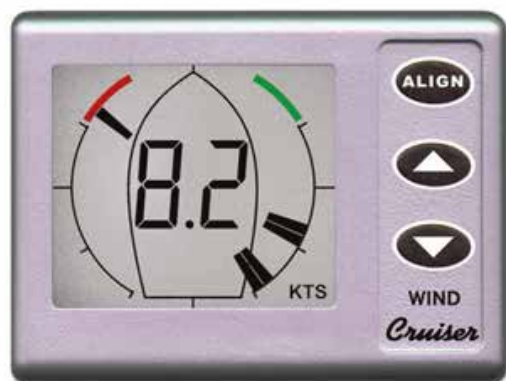
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Riding Light



IN HIS FINAL COLUMN FOR ST, COLIN JARMAN PUTS THE CASE FOR TAN SAILS, PAINTED DECKS AND COLOURED COACH HOUSES. ALSO THIS MONTH, LOG POOLS, READINESS FOR SEA AND A FAREWELL

Why white?

White sails are a constant source of puzzlement to me. Why do people choose them? I know more and more laminated sails are being used on cruising boats and that many of these are grey or even black in parts, but most family cruisers still wear white sails.

Boat owners don't seem to have an aversion to brightly-coloured cruising chutes and spinnakers, so why are they so fond of glaring white mainsails and genoas?

White hulls are the norm as well, but I'm less worried about this than the white decks and coach houses that go with them. Why? Because all of this white is shiny and highly reflective of sunlight, which means eye strain. It can happen readily enough on a British summer's day, but is guaranteed to drive you to reach for the sunglasses if you sail south for the Trades, the Med or the Caribbean.

When cruising yachts had laid decks or even painted ones, this was not the problem it is now. The pale grey colour of the wood and the grey or pale blue of the deck paint was gentler on the eyes when the sun shone – and if the spray flew over laid decks they turned a nice dark colour, which was even less reflective.

Modern sunglasses alleviate UV problems and reduce glare from white sails and decks, but they rarely look good and are impossible if you need to wear prescription glasses. Why not avoid the problem by insisting on coloured sail cloth – tan for me, please – and pastel coloured decks, preferably grey? It would make boats look better and coloured sails could be easier to see in stormy seas – a win, win situation.

Come on, be colourful, be kind to your eyes and help ships' lookouts (or even rescuers) to see you.

Log pool

The log pool or pond was once a common site near almost any yard building wooden vessels, from warships to fishing smacks. In them were seasoning logs, which would later be sawn into planks and stacked for drying and further seasoning before being used. They're all but gone now, with timber being kiln-dried and 'seasoned', but I was delighted to find a tidal pond near a sailing barge repair yard



COLIN JARMAN

You'll reach for the sunglasses if you sail for the Trades or the Med

in Essex recently – and a grand sight it was too. The logs didn't look too good, green and muddy as they were, but in time and sawn, they'll be transformed.

Ready for sea

The old description, 'in all respects ready for sea', is one loaded with pride and trepidation. Is your vessel ever ready for whatever the sea may throw at her? For that matter, are you?

I doubt it on both counts. Humans are never fully equipped to face what the sea may throw at them. It's one of the things that makes seagoing so interesting.

As for the boat, I can't be sure, but even in the days of the sailing Navy, repairs were always having to be made to hull, sails and rigging. Today it may be that a control system that has been adequate for the last few years of coastal cruising will prove flawed as the boat sails off the continental shelf. It's Sod's Law.

But to strive to achieve readiness in terms of both your boat and yourself is logical and, dare I say it, essential for safety and enjoyment. It will also give you reason to be proud and to put to sea with confidence.

Farewell

And finally, I have been writing *Riding Light* for about 15 years and have enjoyed every single one, but I'm told the time has come to bid you all goodbye.

While I have been a member of the Ocean Cruising Club for 40 years now, my horizons have narrowed in the last few years. Meanwhile, as the size of cruising yachts grows, my own taste is for smaller, older vessels with a bit of character to them.

I'm sad to go, but perhaps I'll keep on with something akin to *Riding Light*, publishing it online via one of my own websites, who knows?

So thank you for reading my words and may the wind and tide be always with you as your wake lengthens. ✦

YOUR VIEW

Would you put up with white sails in the name of tradition?



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editor@sailingtoday.
co.uk

COLIN JARMAN helped launch Sailing Today in 1997 and lives and sails on the east coast. Read his *Riding Light* blog online at sailingtoday.co.uk



2006 LEGEND 38 Call Swanwick
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2 Cabin **£64,950**



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2 Cabin **£69,950**



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3 Cabin **£42,950**



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2 Cabin **£95,371 INC VAT**



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2 Cabin **£43,500**



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2 Cabin **£69,950**



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3 Cabin **£79,950**



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3 cabin **£42,950**



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2 cabin **£47,950**



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2 Cabin **£39,500**



2002 LEGEND 326 Call Swanwick
2 cabin **£46,995**



2010 BAVARIA CRUISER 34 Call Port Solent
2 Cabin **£77,950**



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2 Cabin **£39,950**



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3 Cabin **£42,500**



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£65,000



Island Packet 440

A Luxury Blue Water Cruiser, 2007 Year Model, Long Keel, Wheel Steering, In-mast Mainsail Furling, Yanmar 4JH4 75hp Diesel Engine, Bow Thruster, Electric Windlass, Raymarine Auto Helm, Raymarine E80 Dual Station. Lying Eastbourne.

£285,000



Moody 425

1990 Year Model, Blue Water Cruiser, Thornycroft (2003) 55 hp Diesel Engine, Deep Fin & Skeg Keel, Wheel Steering, Slab Reefed Mainsail, Eight Berths in Four Cabins, Stowe Tri Data Instruments, Raymarine C90W Chart Plotter with Integrated Digital HD Radar, Raymarine S4000+ Autopilot, Electric Anchor Windlass and CopperCoat. Lying Eastbourne

£75,000



Dufour 525 Grand Large

2007 Year Model, 3 Double Cabins All With En Suites, Volvo Penta 75hp Engine, Shallow Fin Keel, Twin Wheel Steering, In Mast Main Sail, Bow Thruster, Auto-Helm, Full Raymarine Electronics, Bose Stereo & Cabin Heating. Lying Spain

£170,000



Icelander 43

1999 Year Model, Steel Multi-Chine Hull Blue Water Cruising Yacht, Bermudan Cutter Rig, Wheel Steering, Center Board Keel, Rigged Originally for Single Handed Sailing. Ford 75hp Diesel Engine, 6 Berths in 3 Cabins, Navman GPS Plotter, JRC Radar, Cetrek Tri Data Instruments. Lying Eastbourne.

£71,500



Oyster 435

1990 Year Model, Cutter Rigged Blue Water Cruiser, Volvo D255 63 hp Diesel (2002) Engine, Fin Keel, Wheel Steering, Fully Battened Mainsail, Eight Berths in Three Cabins, Fully Electronics, Autopilot, Bow Thruster & Electric Windlass. Lying Eastbourne

£120,000



Seaqwest Prima 38

2001 Year Model, 12 Berths, Deep Fin Keel, Wheel Steering, Carbon Mast, Stainless Steel Rod Rigging, Carbon Spinnaker Pole, Nexus Electronics, Nexus Autopilot, Good Sail and Spinnaker Inventory. Lying Eastbourne

£66,950



Hanse 371

2003 Year Model, Volvo Penta 29hp Sail Drive Diesel Engine, Deep Fin Keel, Wheel Steering, Self-Tacking Foresail, Slab Reefed Mainsail, Owner's Two Cabin Configuration, Simrad Tri Data Instruments, Simrad CR44 Chart Plotter with integrated Radar, Simrad DSC VHF Radio and Electric Anchor Windlass. Lying Eastbourne

£64,950



Beneteau Oceanis 34

2011 Year Model, Yanmar 29 hp Diesel Engine, Deep Fin Keel, Wheel Steering, In-Mast Mainsail, Elegance Trim, Electronics Pack, Simrad Autopilot, Electric Anchor Windlass, Sidepower SE40 Bow Thruster, Asymmetric Spinnaker Rigging, Full Camper Cockpit Cover, Webasto Cabin Heating & CopperCoat. Lying Eastbourne

£79,950



Hunter Legend 33.5

1989 Year Model, 7 Berths in 3 Cabins, Shallow Bulb Wing Keel, Wheel Steering, In Mast Main Sail, Yanmar GM20F 18hp Engine, Raymarine Wheel Auto Pilot, Stowe Tri Data Instruments. Lying Eastbourne

£29,950



Beneteau Oceanis 34

2010 Year Model, Owner's 2 Cabin Elegance Version, Deep Fin Keel, Wheel Steering, Slab Reefed Main Sail, Yanmar 3YM30 Diesel Engine, Raymarine Electronics, Asymmetric Spinnaker Rigging and Eberspacher Heating. Lying Eastbourne

£79,950



Scanyacht 290 Voyager

2001 Year Model, Yanmar 27hp Diesel Engine, Long Keel, Slab Reefed Mainsail, Wheelhouse Steering or Tiller in Cockpit, Five Berths, Raymarine Tri Data Instruments, Raymarine Chart Plotter, Raymarine ST5000 Auto-Pilot, Simrad RD68 DSC VHF Radio, Electric Anchor Windlass and Wind Generator. Lying Eastbourne

£49,950



Moody Carbineer 44

1972 Year Model, Deck Saloon, Ketch Rig, Wheel Steering, Long keel, Hull Epoxy Treated 1993, Perkins 120hp Diesel Engine, 6 Berths in 3 Cabins, Yeoman Chart Plotter, Raymarine Radar, Raymarine Bi Data Instruments & Auto-Pilot, Vetus Bow Thruster & Electric Windlass. Lying Lanzarote.

£98,000



Sadler 32

1980 Year Model, 6 Berth, Fin & Skeg Keel, Tiller Steering, In-Mast Main Sail, Furling Genoa, Watermota Sea Panther 30hp Diesel Engine, Navman Tri Data Instruments, Navman Plotter & GPS and Simrad Tiller Pilot. Lying Eastbourne

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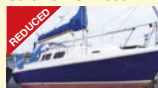
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The Beneteau 57 'classic cruiser' came out of Bruce Farr's design studio in 2000 – a production boat with a long list of standard features and a luxurious edge.

One of her most striking features is the helm, which sits on the front port side of the centre cockpit, behind a fixed windscreen. It might feel a little odd but it creates more space in the cockpit, which is invaluable while bluewater cruising.

This yacht has cruised the Mediterranean but is kitted out to go further in comfort. She boasts air-con, watermaker and dinghy

davits. Accommodation is in four cabins, including an aft owner's suite.

All sails are roller furling, with powered winches. The spinnaker is new and her hull was painted blue in 2013.

She's in Corfu (tax is paid) and being sold through Ancasta's London office.

► ancasta.com

LOA: 57ft (17m)

Beam: 16ft (4.9m)

Draught: 8ft 6in (2.6m)

Year built: 2003

Berths: 8



HUNTER LEGEND 36 | SOMHAIRLE

Legends, called Hunters in America, are known for their roomy feel and comfort. Despite being 36ft, *Somhairle* has 6ft 5in of headroom in the saloon, a kingsize bed in the aft cabin, can fit eight round the saloon table for dinner and can sleep seven people – four in the two double cabins plus three sea berths.

Legend's fractional B&R rig with its swept-back spreaders, long boom and no backstay, seems to divide people into two camps – either they enjoy sailing these yachts, saying they are easily handled, or they hate them, complaining that they are hard to point.

The bilge keels have a Marmite effect, too – but there's no denying the advantage of being able to dry out like this in Brittany or the West Country.

Built in the UK by Luhrs in Portland, she has a GRP hull with Kevlar and structural grid reinforcements and 600 hours on the 28hp Yanmar engine, which has been serviced annually.

She's currently lying Chichester and VAT is paid.

► legendyachtsuk.co.uk

LOA: 35ft 6in (10.8m)

Beam: 12ft (3.7m)

Draught: 5ft (1.5m)

Year built: 2004

Berths: 7



£135,000



OYSTER 406 | *SEPHINA OF BEAUMARIS*

It is hard to believe, looking at *Sephina*, that she is approaching her 30th birthday.

She underwent, in the words of the brokers, a 'mammoth' refit costing £130,000 in 2012 and is kitted for bluewater 'to the nth degree'. Her kit list includes everything from a security alarm and RedBox Wi-Fi to a tow gen, spare prop and new engine bay sound-deadening.

She's sailed extensively, doing the ARC in 2013 and cruising the Caribbean afterwards.

Oyster built only 35 of these 406s between 1986 and 1990 and the design was based on the 55, with 'big boat' standards of accommodation offered in a smaller package, so even at 40ft she is roomy below, with plenty of headroom.

As for her charms, the current owner says: "My wife would say it was

the washing machine, air-con, island bed and power shower that made it a joy to live on. I would say it was the go-anywhere ability, full sail wardrobe and the joy of owning an Oyster, which is recognised around the world.

"She always turns heads and many people mistake her for a new boat. We will be sad to see her go but family life moves on."

Sephina is lying in Lymington and VAT is paid.

► berthon.co.uk

LOA: 40ft 6in (12.3m)

Beam: 12ft 9in (3.9m)

Draught: 6ft 1in (1.9m)

Year built: 1987

Berths: 6

THE SURVEYOR

Yacht Brokers, Designers & Surveyors Association

"The Oyster 406 is strongly built, with high quality joinery, teak and teak-faced ply.

"It is vital that the surveyor gains access to the base of the ballast keel to check for any separation between the ballast and the keel laminate.

"Sometimes water has entered the foam-filled rudder through the stainless-steel-to-resin joint, which tends to break down over time.

"Provided that the wires of the Whitlock steering cable system have been well greased, it tends to be reliable.

"Original teak or Treadmaster decking will probably need replacing. With teak decks the balsa sandwich construction needs to be checked to see if water has got in through the fastenings – a potentially expensive repair.

"The original Perkins 4.108 is a very solid and reliable engine but problems might be found with the salt water pump and heat exchanger.

"Any vessel of this age probably requires attention to piping and wiring."

The designer

Holman and Pye

The design firm was started by Kim Holman – creator of winning racing yachts and one of the first GRP production yachts in Britain, the Elizabethan 29 – and architect Don Pye, in the late 1960s. Shortly after, Holman left and David Cooper joined Holman and Pye, based in West Mersea, Essex.

The firm drew Oyster's range for them until about a decade ago, working with Rob Humphreys on the Oyster 56. It also drew UFO cruiser/racers, Seamasters and early Hustlers.

"One of the 406s we did had a raised coach roof, which was probably one of the first deck saloons we had," recalls David Cooper, who is now retired.





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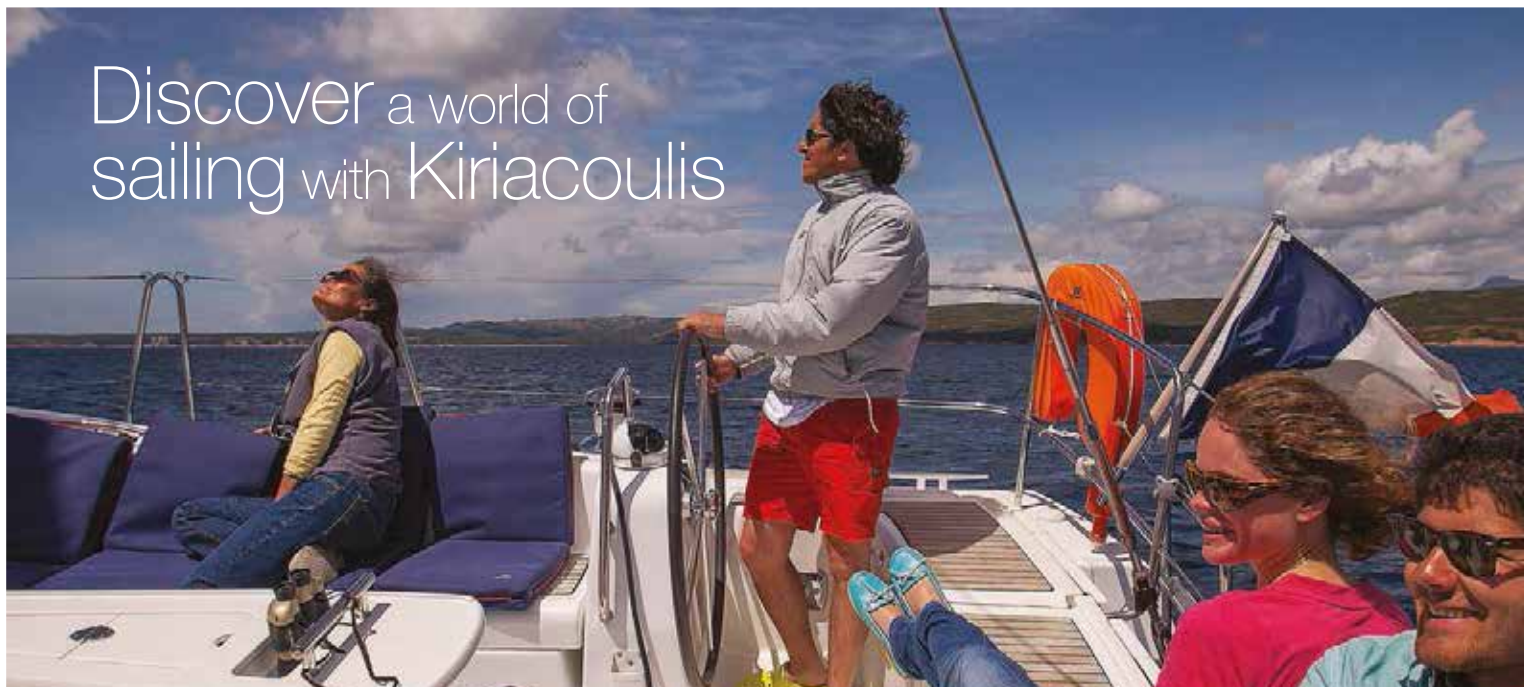


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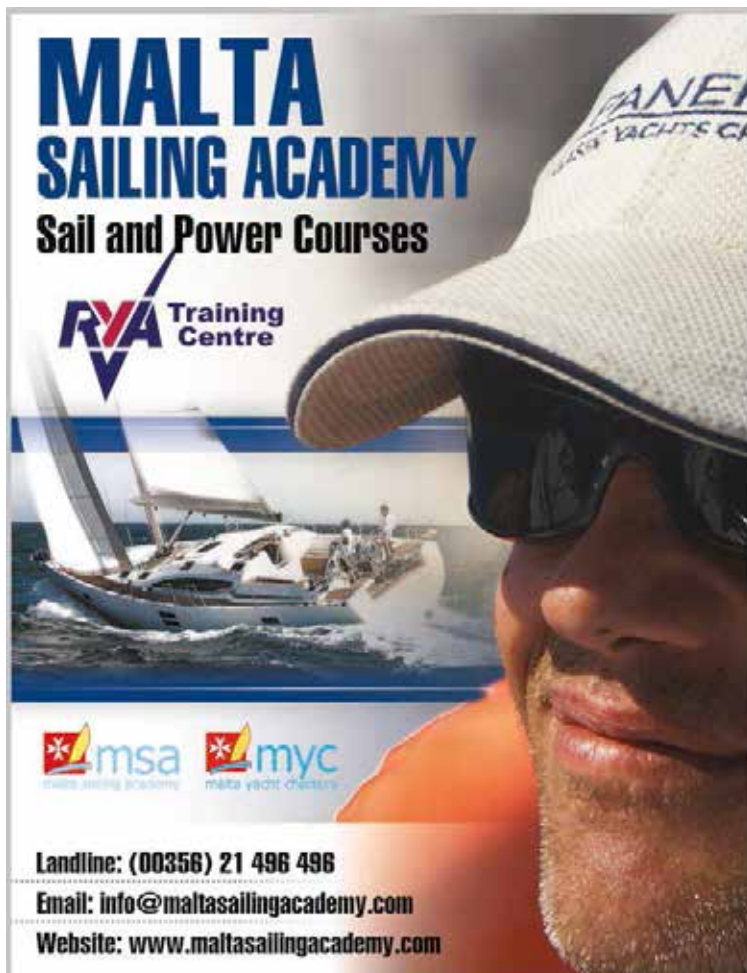
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What's on

EVENTS | DIARY DATES | PLACES TO VISIT

60TH ANNIVERSARY, ANNONCIADE MUSEUM, ST TROPEZ 12 JUNE – 18 OCTOBER



Art featuring St Tropez and its marine setting from the likes of Paul Signac and Albert Marquet, who painted the port in 1905. Open 10.00–13.00 and 14.00–18.00. c£4.50
saint-tropez.fr

EDDYSTONE CHARITY PURSUIT | 13 JUNE

The 14th annual 26-mile charity chase from Plymouth Sound and back. Route to be announced the night before. Prize pot of £16,500.
eddystonepursuit.com



PAUL BULLEN

CUTTY SARK HAWK TALK EVERY MONDAY IN JUNE



Bird of prey specialist Gary Railton explains how Harris hawk Norman keeps the tea clipper's rigging free of pigeons, starlings and the occasional seagull. 10.00–12.00. Included in admission price.
rmg.co.uk/cuttrysark

RMG

DON'T MISS OUR SISTER TITLES THIS MONTH

Classic Boat

- ▶ Maine SoT designers Stephens Waring
- ▶ 2015 Dunkirk return
- ▶ Classic Boat Awards 2015 winners



Yachts & Yachting

- ▶ Summer regattas; plus top European venue guides
- ▶ The VOR halfway report
- ▶ Ian Williams: quizzing the match racing record holder



NEXT MONTH IN SAILING TODAY

ATLANTIC SPAIN Galicia's stunning rias are only a few days' sail from the UK

PAUL HEINEY In his first exclusive column for *Sailing Today*: how to find the ideal shipmate

FEELING 44 Rebirth of the popular French marque

ON SALE 29 MAY

WHAT CHART? We compare the three main brands of digital cartography



Northern Boat Show, 5-7 June, Albert Dock, Liverpool. Sailing and power boats and marine systems and services – at the International Mersey River Festival. Free entry.
northernboatshow.co.uk



KAREN WALKER

Sail the Wight cruise in company, 6 June, Isle of Wight. Cruise (or race) east about the island. Organised by East Cowes SC and the Westerly Owners' Association.
sailthewight.org.uk



Gosport Marine Festival, 13 June. Charity pursuit, sailing tasters, historic vessels. Free entry.
gosportmarinefestival.org.uk

Word of mouth

LETTERS | TWITTER | FACEBOOK | EMAIL

COMMENT OF THE MONTH

A question of warmth

The feature in the May issue [ST217] on new marine clothing confirms my view that the major manufacturers are becoming increasingly divorced from the needs of their core customer base. The product manager of a major brand is quoted as saying: “Over the past 10 years or so, a lot of the warmth has been removed from jackets... sailors are now expected to use base layers for warmth”.

So the sun goes in, the wind pipes up and a bit of spray starts coming over the side. It suddenly feels noticeably cooler. These are the classic conditions when we reach for our trusty sailing jacket, looking mainly for warmth as well as waterproofing, and taking comfort in its solidity and weight. Who wants to faff around changing base layers as well?

Perhaps this new generation of sailing gear is ideally suited to high performance racers, but for the average cruising sailor, I suspect that the older technology we already have on our boats is in fact a much better option.

Peter Crouch, by email



PRIZE COMMENT

Our star letter wins a bottle of Old Pulteney Navigator, the genuine maritime malt distilled in the fishing town of Wick. www.inverhouse.com

Weather worries

Sailors, particularly leisure sailors, are increasingly using the internet to obtain marine safety information as a back-up or alternative to marine radio services. With broadband access, there are no great problems. But with bandwidth restrictions (such as when using a satphone), those on long sea passages can only use email to obtain GMDSS text information from services like SailDocs and MailaSail. Even for some coastal sailors, broadband may



be unavailable and roaming charges can also be a limiting factor abroad.

To obtain GMDSS texts using email requires static URLs, but these are not always available – think Météo France, DWD (Germany), AEMet (Spain) and the JCOMM (for NAVTEX messages) websites. Although Météo France makes it possible to bookmark, they still cannot be



YOUR PHOTOGRAPHS



ISN'T CAPTAIN OUR
dog gorgeous? He loves
#sailing, thanks, he is sweet
— Alana Cowell via Twitter

TO SEA OR not to
Sea author Alana
Cowell got close to
Sovereign Lighthouse
near Eastbourne



KATE WALKER WAS
on an advanced skills
course in the Solent
and stopped at East
Cowes Marina



obtained by email. I believe that this is totally irresponsible, since vital safety information becomes inaccessible.

To address this issue requires that:

- All weather and navigation MSI should be made readily and easily available online.
- Web pages of MSI should have good, rapid updating procedures.
- All MSI pages should have static URLs capable of being bookmarked.
- MSI URLs should not be changed without adequate notice and overlapping.
- Changes to MSI web page locations should always have redirect facilities.

Frank Singleton, by email

Off with the outboards

[Responding to news that 'up to 60' outboards had been stolen at Hythe Sailing Club]

Unfortunately we have been misquoted in the press before the full extent of our loss was known. We suffered a burglary to our Bosuns' store where tools and equipment were stolen.

About 20 of our members also had outboard motors to their tenders stolen from a secure unit.

The police are investigating this crime which they believed was organised by a criminal gang targeting sailing clubs and marinas.

I would urge those buying second-hand outboard motors and other identifiable equipment to check the identity numbers with the police before purchase. Stolen property remains stolen even if innocently purchased and

will be seized by the police if discovered.

The club management is reviewing our security, which is considered robust, but further improvements will be made.

Boat owners should register their identifiable equipment on the National Mobile Property Register with the free-to-use Immobilise database which is used nationally by all police forces.

Michael Thomas, vice-commodore

Re Rod Heikell's full reply on climate change (published on sailingtoday.co.uk), the 'Hockey Stick' graph has been fairly well discredited and science is either proven or unproven – not 20% sure, 50% sure or 90% sure – and the last 18 years of experience are enough to question computer models with thousands of variables. Even the Royal Society says Question Everything.

Stephen Lloyd Clarke, via Facebook

There was a good article in March's *Sailing Today* about raster charts and electronic plotters by Don Street, who works with us on our Imray-lolaire Caribbean and Atlantic chart range. He illustrates how important it is to also carry paper charts, which we at Imray like to hear!

Imray Laurie Norie & Wilson, via Facebook

Tide table printing is the first sign that the impending season is coming fast. Just printed from Neptune Tide Tables, six months for Oban, Ullapool, Craighouse, so we are good to go!

Jim Hepburn, via Facebook



Retweet

We reminded everyone on Facebook about the clocks going forward and the need to add an hour to tide table times.

Looking forward to getting an extra hour's daylight in the evening. Thanks *Sailing Today* for the reminder about tide table times – **Imray Laurie & Wilson**

Don't forget clocks go forward this Sunday! #BritishSummerTime – **C-Quip Ltd**

In response to our April Shortlist on wind generators:

Having had two Rutland wind turbines, a 913 and now the latest 914i, I can say that they are an essential bit of kit. But they need to be matched to the correct regulators – **Jim Hepburn, Facebook**

Guess where we are today?
– **@SailingTodayMag**

@SailingTodayMag Plymouth. That would be a good start of a series of where am I – **@CaptJohnSilver**

@CaptJohnSilver Do you want to start the ball rolling? The rule is a photo of ST in a maritime location...

@Sailing TodayMag I will, but landlocked for two more weeks...

@CaptJohnSilver Let's play in a fortnight then ☺

@SailingTodayMag Sure, and it will be a tough one, that I can promise



JIM HEPBURN HAS made a pushpit bracket for his kedge after taking ST's advice on having it ready to go

ANDREW FURNESS WAS out with Britsail in the Kyles of Bute



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Dispatches

ALCOUTIM | THURSDAY'S CHILD



***Thursday's Child*, our Sadler 34, slipped her mooring in Yarmouth and my family (wife Joanna, son Harry, 10, daughter Isabelle, 8, and myself) sailed out past the Needles in July 2014.**

Since then we have sailed 2,000 miles and have spent several months enjoying the *rias* in Spain with their secluded anchorages and resident dolphins, we have explored the coast of Portugal and are now in the Algarve. Sharing the seas with whales and dolphins has been a highlight, and Harry has caught many Bonito tuna! We have visited La Coruña, Lisbon, Santiago de Compostela, Porto and Seville – beautiful cities with fascinating architecture. We have explored the River Guadiana and sailed in over 30 knots in the Gibraltar Straits, and visited Ceuta in Africa.

We return to the Channel in May to investigate where my father landed on D-Day near Ouistreham, before returning to the UK in July. One of the joys of the journey is meeting like-minded and friendly people living their own adventures and hope to meet more before we return home. The plan was originally to sail to the Caribbean, but plans change, and as a family it has been wonderful to slow down, have time together and not to be 'pushing on' all the time during this special year-long sabbatical.



THURSDAY'S CHILD

Sadler 34

LOA: 34ft 11in (10.6m)

Beam: 10ft 11in (3.3m)

Draught: 5ft 1in (1.6m)

Engine: Bukh DV20

Berths: 7

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